THE

LITERARY AND FASHIONABLE MAGAZINE,

FOR JANUARY, 1809.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF ILLUSTRIOUS MEN.

The Thirtieth Number.

RIGHT HON. LORD CHANCELLOR ELDON.

IT is the peculiar praise of the English Aristocracy that it is accessible to every class of the people. There is no impassible gulph between even the lowest order of the peasantry and the highest rank of nobility. Nothing is required but superior merit, to pass from one to the other.

It is from this reason that the study of the law has enriched the English Aristocracy with some of its most distinguished ornaments.—Nearly one third of the whole nobility of England are either lawyers or descendants of lawyers. The Constitution reaps a double advantage from this distribution of its honours. In the first place, the laws are doubtless best supported by those who best understand them, or who, even if they have no professional knowledge, have at least an hereditary veneration for the means of their elevation. Hence, indeed, the House of Lords has ever been peculiarly considered to be the best guardian of the Constitution in general, in the same manner as the popular rights are understood to be the peculiar care of the Commons. It is a second most undoubted good resulting from the same cause, that, under the contemplation of the high honours to which professional excellence may elevate its possessors, the students of the law are encouraged to greater efforts, and these efforts naturally lead to excellence. There are men who would be invincible by money, but who yield to honours. Neither Lord Hale, nor Lord Coke, nor Lord Mansfield, would have embraced the profession had they not promised themselves more than the bounty of their clients.

These remarks are naturally suggested by the subject of the present biography; who, by superior industry united to superior talent, has overcome the obstacles of inferior station, and raised himself to the highest honours of the state. Something of this, perhaps, may be imputed to fortune; but what is peculiarly his own, is, that he has accomplished this elevation without having become the instrument of a court or minister—that he has forced his way by his own talents, and owes nothing to the minister of the day, but that he had discrimination enough to discover his worth, and public spirit enough to call it into exercise.

John Scott, now Lord Eldon, was born in the town of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, about the year 1774. His father, Mr. William Scott, was a coal or rather corn merchant in the same place; but, having a narrow capital, could seldom trade on his own bottom. His chief business, therefore, consisted in the freight of corn and coals to the metropolis. According to the best accounts he did not succeed, and was never above a very slender mediocrity.—His reputation, however, was untainted—he was superior to his business; and fortune, or

rather Providence, seems to have indemnified him for his own obscurity by the honour of his sons. From the narrow profits of his business he contrived to give his children that education which has been, in fact, the basis of their greatness. His two sons, John and William, were accordingly sent to a classical school, and as they boarded at home, the expences were rendered more moderate. There are yet living many respectable tradesmen in Newcastle, who remember to have seen the present Lord Chancellor, and Judge of the Admiralty, "with satchel "on their backs, and fresh morning face," proceeding from their father's house to the free grammar school.

The progress of the children rewarded the cares of the parents. John Scott early distinguished himself for solidity of judgment, and an understanding, which, in proportion to its slowness, was deep and comprehensive. He is said, therefore, to have learned slowly, but to have learned thoroughly. His attention was always at his command; and, once fixed upon an object, was irremovable till he had examined it in all its parts. This is, in fact, the present character of the Chancellor. He is considered at the bar, as he formerly was at school, as possessing a mind more solid than quick; very slow in determining, but always right.—We believe that he has never had a judgment reversed. The late preceding Chancellor, Lord Erskine, was accustomed to say, that the House would only lose its time by listening to the appeals from the judgments of his predecessor—that they had only one character—they were brought only to gain time, and to run the life of the one party against the other.

It was the decided opinion of Earl Mansfield, and an opinion recommended by his own peculiar excellence, that no eminence could be expected in the study of the law unless previously laid in classical learning. "It is not sufficient," said his Lordship, "that the student "of the law should understand the Dog Latin "which is used in his profession; this is a jargon, indeed, which has its use, inasmuch as "by a long habit it has been brought to convey a precise meaning. The student, if he "really aim at excellence, must form his taste "and his understanding by the ancient models; "it is in these only that he can learn to unite "eloquence and reasoning—the utmost powers "of the judgment with the discreet use of the "imagination. The elements of the law, moreover," says the same authority, "are hidden "behind a Latin veil, and the most excellent "learning must be lost to him who has not skill "enough to raise it at his pleasure. Let the "law student, therefore, possess himself of this "key to ancient treasures."

The father of Lord Eldon entertained the same opinion; and, though himself a man of narrow learning, spared no efforts to cultivate the understanding of his children. William Scott had a quickness of parts much superior to his brother: but their father, a man of much natural penetration, was not deceived by this external blazonry, and, if report may be credited, always predicted that John would be the most eminent. "The county," said he, "cannot produce such a boy as John; under "that heavy stupid eye, and that watery head, "he possesses a mind of which the world will "hereafter understand the worth."

After some years passed by them at the grammar school, in which John Scott obtained most learning, and his brother, William, most reputation, their father sent them up to the metropolis to be duly entered at the Temple.

The name of John Scott appears in the books in the year 1765, but his brother was not entered till the following year.

The two brothers continued to study together in the Temple as at school. They lived in the same chambers, and had the same books. Sir William Scott has been heard repeatedly to acknowledge his obligations to the more penetrating judgment of his brother. One thing, indeed, Sir William appears to have learned almost solely from Lord Eldon: we need not say that we here speak of the habit of application. Lord Eldon, during the six or seven years which he employed at the Temple, consumed at least six hours daily in the acquisition of professional knowledge: his Lordship has subsequently reaped the full advantage of this early application. He now possesses the reputation of being the most profound lawyer on the bench.

It may be thought, perhaps, that the proverbial slowness of his decisions contradicts this assertion. But the point of fact is, that this tardiness is the very effect of the variety of his knowledge. His memory is so stored with cases, that he is perplexed by the multitude of seemingly contrary precedents—He has so many rules before him, that he scarcely knows which to apply. He has to seek distinctions in cases apparently exactly similar. If one case alone arose in his memory, he would have no difficulty to decide in the moment. His decision would be more absolute—if his learning was more narrow.

In the year 1777 Mr. John Scott was duly

called to the bar. He made his appearance in Court with more reputation amongst his immediate friends than amongst the bar in general. He was considered by some as an object even of ridicule, for his very attempt to succeed: others, who knew him more intimately, boldly avowed his excellence, and predicted that a few years would place him at the head of his profession. Amongst these was Mr. Thurlow, at that time Attorney-General. He had studied under the greatest pecuniary difficulties. He had supported himself, in common with Burke, by writing for Dodsley. Thurlow, therefore, had a sympathy for Mr. Scott. During an intercourse, at first merely casual, he discovered the talents and acquired knowledge of Lord Eldon. This was sufficient for Thurlow, who, in the consciousness of talents, venerated them in others. He immediately cultivated the acquaintance of Mr. Scott; and, by his direct encouragement, was the means of introducing him to the world.

Mr. Scott was, for a very considerable time, kept back by his own fault. "Two things," said Lord Thurlow, "are necessary to a coun-"sel; confidence to push himself on the stage, "and learning enough to justify him when he is "there." Mr. Scott had a timidity of nature —an awkwardness of address, which kept him in the back ground.

Several years after he was called to the bar, nothing would induce Mr. Scott to push himself into notice; on the other hand, he very patiently suffered himself to be pushed aside.—The remonstrances of his immediate friends, and the encouragement of Thurlow, were equally ineffectual. Under the influence of this natural diffidence, he almost wholly withdrew himself from the courts, and employed himself as a conveyancer and draftsman; a part of the law, which, from its connexion with ancient tenures, has been deservedly the favourite branch of the most eminent lawyers. Mr. Scott advanced his fortune more than his reputation by this practice. He doubtless proved himself the best conveyancer of the day; but this did not satisfy those who knew him likewise to be the best lawyer. They accordingly remonstrated with him, that, having so much in his power, he contented himself with so little.

About this time commenced the well known professional jealousy between Mr. Alexander Wedderburne and Mr. Thurlow. Thurlow possessed the more manly mind: Mr. Wedderburne had the talent of application, and the power of retention. Wedderburne was slow, but patient, industrious, examining in detail what he could not comprehend as a system,—He overcame every difficulty by his assiduity. His comparative slowness of parts was more than compensated by his superior industry.—Thurlow could have learned more in an hour than Wedderburne in a day, but Thurlow could not be brought to apply himself for the hour, whilst Wedderburne had no difficulty to study for the day. Wedderburne, therefore, with very inferior talents, had advanced so rapidly on Thurlow, that it became a doubt amongst the profession which was the best lawyer.

Mr. Thurlow had now an object to accomplish, and he fixed upon Mr. Scott for his means and instrument. He was resolved to bring him forward as a rival to Mr. Wedderburne. Mr. Thurlow had a vanity beneath his acknowledged talents.—It was as if he had said, I will bring forward a scholar who shall excel Wedderburne.

Mr. Scott, under this patronage, was soon pushed upon the stage in his own despite. Mr. Thurlow soon afterwards became Chancellor, and continued his patronage to Mr. Scott. Mr. Thurlow is reported to have offered his friend one of the masterships of the court at that time vacant, and which Mr. Scott is said to have declined. It is impossible to conjecture any probable cause for the refusal. It is stated, indeed, that something of delicacy occurred to prevent Mr. Scott from accepting this favour from his patron. It had been previously, we believe, promised to another.

Mr. Scott became in a short time well known, and much reputed as a sound lawyer. Such a reputation is necessarily accompanied by an increasing practice; and Mr. Scott was so fortunate, that in the short space of three years, he is said to have amassed many thousand pounds. His clients were liberal in proportion to the merit of their advocate.

In the year 1783, Mr. Scott obtained a patent of precedency, entitling him to the honours of King's Council. In the same year his practice was considered as increasing so fast that he was thought to be in the road of becoming one of the richest men at the bar. His professional success was accompanied by so much prudence and economy, that his expenditure bore no proportion to his income.

In the following year, 1784, the Fox ministry brought in the celebrated India Bill, the result of which was, that the King resolved to rid himself of an administration which he suspected to be about to render itself independent

of his authority. A difficulty here occurred. No one was willing to encounter the opposition of such a powerful administration. In this state of things, Mr. Pitt became known to his Majesty; and, as the confidence of this young man was at that period equal to his abilities, he was persuaded to undertake the vacant office.

Lord Thurlow consented to retain the seals; and, in the bustle of party-changes, cast his eyes upon Mr. Scott. It was not, however, politically convenient to bring him in either as Solicitor or Attorney-General; so that his Lordship was contented that he should be introduced into Parliament. Accordingly in the new Parliament, he was elected for the borough of Weobly, in Herefordshire. It was fully understood, however, that he accepted his seat, conditioning that he should be permitted to vote independently.

The business of the first Parliament of the administration of Mr. Pitt was such as required the most powerful talents. It has even been understood that the minister was, during this time, almost solely governed by Lord Thurlow; who, upon his own part, is said frequently to have consulted with Mr. Scott, and to have derived much assistance from his solid judgment. Mr. Pitt's India Bill is understood to have been framed between Lord Thurlow and Mr. Scott. Mr. Fox's bill was the most able measure; but Mr. Pitt had entered into office upon the avowed principle, and even positive engagement, of decided opposition to this measure. Mr. Pitt, therefore, was compelled to produce something in its stead. He borrowed much of the matter, and direct stipulations of Mr. Fox's bill; but, in order that the measure might appear his own, he sometimes departed widely from his original. The consequence was as might have been expected. It was an expedient of the day.

Lord Eldon is supposed to have had a considerable share in the bill for prohibiting the commercial intercourse of the West India colonies with the United States of America.

The West Indies depend so wholly upon America for their supply of timber and fuel, that the importation of the produce of the colonies had often actually been prevented by the interruption of this supply. The necessary operations of preparing sugar, cotton, &c. require a large stock of wood; and even the largest of the West India islands, Jamaica, is not equal to a tenth part of its own supply.

It was unfortunately represented to the English minister, that the Americans derived considerable profit from this trade—a profit to which their revolt, and subsequent independence, had not entitled them. It was added, that the British trader lost in proportion as the American trader gained; that the woods of Canada, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia, were fully equal to the supply of the colonies; and that if the American trade was prohibited, the English plantations must necessarily succeed to the supply. Resentment was listened to before prudence; and, to avenge ourselves on the Americans, a prohibitory bill almost ruined the colonies.

If this bill had been imputed to Mr. Scott, it is necessary to acknowledge, that the repeal of it is attributed to the same advice. It is, indeed, a part of the character of Lord Eldon, that, however slow in determining, he is never obstinate in his decision—that his mind is open to argument, even after he has declared his opinion—that when convinced of his error, he never hesitates at the acknowledgment—and that he is as anxious to repair the effects of a mistake, as some others are to conceal it.

When, therefore, the unhappy effects of the American Prohibitory Bill were made known, when it was found that it had been productive of the most bitter and general distress, Mr. Scott was the first to propose, in Parliament, that the obnoxious bill should be repealed.—He was here, we believe, in opposition to Lord Thurlow, whose firmness too frequently bordered upon obstinacy.

The House, together with the minister, were of a different opinion; and concurred with Mr. Scott, that the mischief had been caused by the bill, and that the continuance of it would seal the ruin of the West India colonies. So much attention, however, was given to the pertinacious opposition of Lord Thurlow, that though the bill was repealed, another was substituted in its place, comprehending too many of the obnoxious restrictions. If this subject is again called before the House, we have no doubt that Lord Eldon will not disavow, as Chancellor, the principles which he so ably supported as Mr. Scott.

The next important business in which Mr. Scott appeared with some eminence, and in which he is supposed to have assisted the minister, was the important subject of the "Irish Commercial Regulations." This unpleasant discussion, for such it eventually appeared, occupied the attention of the House during two succeeding sessions.

The principle of these resolutions is entitled to the praise of comprehensiveness. It wil

be found, as may be collected from the resolutions, to be substantially as follows:—That Ireland was entitled to a full participation of all the advantages of Great Britain; that, as a Sister Kingdom, she had a most undoubted right to be put on a fair, equal, and impartial footing with Great Britain, in point of commerce; and this, both with respect to foreign countries, and our own colonies. That, as to the mutual intercourse between each other, the equality should extend to Manufactures, to Importation, and to Exportation; and that, in return for these concessions, Ireland should contribute her full share towards the protection and security of the general commerce.

Throughout the whole discussion of the several resolutions, founded upon the above principle, Mr. Scott distinguished himself by many able speeches; the Minister, accordingly, was considered as regarding him with peculiar favour, and his fortune was already deemed in a fair way of being established.

The Irish Resolutions have been much misrepresented in the course of the contests of the two countries. It is impossible, however, that we can deny their being founded upon a principle of equal indulgence and extent, and that the English Minister thereby merited, in no slight degree, the gratitude of the Irish nation. Mr. Scott should here come in for his share of praise. But, from some unaccountable cause, the Irish have ever considered the proposed concessions in a very different point of view; and Mr. Scott is accordingly regarded by them as no friend to Ireland. The time, however, may arrive, when that nation may think of him with more justice. Faction is often powerful enough to stifle truth, but, fortunately for the interests of mankind, never wholly to extinguish it.

In the following sessions, Mr. Scott again presented himself to the attention of Parliament, upon the subject of the Commercial Treaty with France. This treaty, though favourable to England, and not injurious to Portugal, with some of whose political relations it interfered, excited alarm in the country gentlemen—an alarm at which, considering the subject at this distance of time, it is impossible to repress surprise that this nation, so characteristic for its common sense, should have been so egregiously misled.

The opposition, however, availed themselves of the popular prejudices to harrass the Minister, and the debates were warm, long, and personal. Mr. Scott vindicated the treaty with his accustomed solidity of reasoning; and (what in a season of such party heats is much to his credit) the personal attacks of his opponents could never either divert him from his argument, or provoke him to personalities. He kept his argument and his temper, in despite of assaults on both.

Parliament and the kingdom were now attracted solely to one point, the Impeachment of Warren Hastings. Mr. Scott possessed powers too active not to take a part in this important affair. He spoke on every point, which, in the course of this tedious trial, fell under the cognizance of Parliament. It is well known that the most interesting part of the Impeachment was the daily contests between the rights of the Courts of Law on the one hand, and those of the Parliament on the other. The Advocates on both sides were the most able men of any time or nation.

Mr. Scott greatly distinguished himself in these discussions. From prejudices, natural to a professional man, he was considered as more peculiarly favouring the claims of the Courts. It must be confessed, however, that the Parliament seemed too much disposed to extend its jurisdiction, and to exempt itself from rules, to which, even as a Supreme Court, it should in natural reason have been subjected. The rules of evidence, and the limitations between what is evidence and what is not, are founded on natural equity; and there is, therefore, no sound reason why any even Supreme Court of Judicature should adjudge itself above them.

The next business in which Mr. Scott took an eminent part—a part which immediately led to his future elevation—was the Regency. Throughout the whole of this affair the Minister is said to have been advised almost exclusively by Lord Thurlow and Mr. Scott. It becomes necessary, therefore, to enter some detail upon a subject with which our future historians must necessarily connect the name of Scott.

On the 10th of December, 1788, the Report of the Physicians, touching the state of his Majesty's health, was presented to the House of Commons. Mr. Pitt, by the advice of Mr. Scott (now become Solicitor General) immediately proposed that a Committee should be appointed to examine and report all the precedents of the proceedings of former Parliaments, under circumstances of the interruption or suspension of the Royal Authority, whether by infancy, sickness, or other infirmity.

This Committee was accordingly appointed; and the Attorney and Solicitor General, together with the Master of the Rolls, were in-

structed to prepare the required Report. Mr. Scott's industry and learning were here peculiarly conspicuous.

On the 12th, the Report, which had been prepared, in fact before it was proposed, was presented to the House. The precedents were chiefly three. The first was taken from the reign of Edward the Third. The Parliaments of those days, whether wisely or not, had provided a council about the king's person to act for him. The next precedent was in the reign of Richard the Second, when Counsellors were also appointed to exercise the regal power. The third precedent occurred in the reign of Henry the Sixth, during the infancy of that prince. Parliament was then called together by the king's second uncle, the first being still living, but out of the kingdom—and that act was ratified by Parliament, this grand council of the nation not deeming it sufficient that it was done by the authority of the Duke.

It was contended by Mr. Pitt, Mr. Scott, and the Attorney General, that, in all these several precedents, the right of supplying the interruption of the Royal Authority was clearly in the Parliament:—that the Parliament had been invariably consulted, in order to determine what was to be done—that in the course of their consultations they certainly considered, with due respect, the right of the Heir Apparent—but that the right of the Heir Apparent required this confirmation of Parliament—that Parliament, therefore, having a right to reject, confirm, or prefer, had a most undoubted right to modify its trust and obligation.

Upon these principles, Mr. Scott, as Solicitor General, was ordered to prepare the Act of Agency. This act, which was drawn with much ability, empowered his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales to exercise the Royal Authority in the name and on the behalf of his Majesty, during his Majesty's illness, and to do all acts which might be legally done by his Majesty. The limitations were, that the care of his Majesty's person, and the management of the household, and the direction and appointment of the officers therein, should be in the Queen—that the power to be exercised by the Prince should not extend to the granting of the real and personal property—to the granting of any office in reversion, or to the granting, for any other term than during his Majesty's pleasure, of any pension, or any office whatever, except such as must by law be granted for life; nor to the granting of any rank or dignity of the peerage of this realm to any person, except his Majesty's issue who have attained the age of twenty-one.

This act was rendered unnecessary by the unexpected recovery of his Majesty. The conduct of Mr. Scott, however, during this affair, was no less able than honourable. He afterwards augmented his reputation by his support of the Established Church, against Mr. Fox's repeated motions for the Repeal of the Test Act.

For these, and other services, Mr. Scott was made Attorney General, and knighted, in the year 1793. The King received him upon his introduction with the most distinguished favour—his Majesty, indeed, seems never to have forgotten the staunch friends who adhered to him during that melancholy crisis. Sir John Scott was considered as having become a member of that party, which, from the commencement of the present reign till this time, has retained its original name of the "King's friends."

As Attorney General, Sir John Scott is regarded as having distinguished himself too much in favour of the Prerogative, when it fell to his lot to have the conduct of the prosecutions which Government deemed it necessary to institute against the seditious leaders of the English Convention. The times were full of peril and difficulty. A plan was formed to destroy the Constitution and the Government. That infamous body of men, known by the name of the London Corresponding Society, was formed upon the direct plan of the French Clubs. The plan was to unite, in the first place, small bodies of men; as soon as they reached a greater number, to divide them into small parties; and in this manner (as appeared by their letters and other documents) to spread themselves from town to town, from village to village, and from hamlet to hamlet, till, as they explained it, there should not be an unenlightened man in the whole country.

The proclamation, by which they announced their object, was as singular for its boldness as for atrocity—they candidly avowed their purpose of purifying, as they called it, the representation of the country—openly accused the House of Commons of exercising an usurped authority, and professed their determined resolution to adhere together, and to unite themselves into one firm and permanent body, for the purpose of obtaining an adequate remedy for this intolerable grievance, by corresponding and co-operating with other societies united for the same objects.

Sir John Scott's speech, as Attorney General, was deservedly reputed, as no inconsiderable

specimen of his learning and eloquence—some parts of it were peculiarly animated. In describing the Corresponding Society, he used the following words:

"You will find them organized, prepared for emergencies and exigencies, relying upon their own strength, and determined to act in combination—in some instances acting with a secrecy calculated to elude observation—in others, proceeding directly by contrary means to the accomplishment of the same end—representing their numbers as greater than they were, and, therefore, increasing their number by the very operation of the influence of the appearance of strength.—You will find them inflaming the ignorant, under the pretence of enlightening them—debauching their principles towards their country, under the pretence of infusing political knowledge into them—addressing themselves principally to those whose rights, whose interests are, in the eye of the law and constitution of England, as valuable as those of any men, but whose education does not enable them immediately to distinguish between political truth and the misrepresentations held out to them—working upon the passions of men, whom Providence hath placed in the lower, but useful, and highly respectable situations of life, to irritate them against all that its bounty has blest by assigning to them situations of rank and property;—representing them as their oppressors, as their enemies, as their plunderers, as those whom they should not suffer to exist—and (in order at the same time to shut out the possibility of correcting original error, or rectifying the opinions of those whom they had so inflamed, misinformed, debauched, and misled) not admitting them into these affiliated societies till they had subscribed tests, the principles of which they were not to examine after they had been admitted."

From some cause or other, to the general surprize of the country, as well as to the disappointment of Government, the several accused persons were acquitted. It seems, indeed, to be the general persuasion, that the Ministers had been ill-advised when they brought them to trial on an indictment of *treason*. Had they been tried for *sedition*, there cannot be a doubt but that they would all have been convicted; as the papers produced in evidence clearly made out a most atrocious case. The Jury, on the other hand, considered it their duty to acquit them of treason.

Sir John Scott continued Attorney-General till the administration of Mr. Addington, when he became Lord Chancellor.

We have before had occasion to mention, that he is regarded as being too tardy in his decisions. This, certainly, is an evil of the first magnitude in a court which is itself but too slow in its process. It must be acknowledged, however, on the other hand, that this tardiness of his Lordship must be imputed to his anxious eagerness for justice. He is unwilling to decide whilst there can be a possibility of doubt. The tardiness of the decision, therefore, is in some degree compensated by the rare occurrence of any appeal from the judgment when once delivered.

Lord Eldon remained Chancellor till the death of Mr. Pitt, when he resigned the seals, and he was succeeded by Lord Erskine.

The discussion of the Catholic Question having removed Lord Erskine, in common with the coalition administration, Lord Eldon was again invited to take the seals; and, we believe, was only induced to accept them by the particular request of his Majesty. Lord Eldon is now considered at the head of his Majesty's Councils.

The following is no unpleasing specimen of the general style of Lord Eldon's eloquence.—It is a part of his Lordship's speech, on the trial of Hardy for high treason:

"Gentlemen, it is the great province of a British Jury, and God forbid these prisoners should not have the benefit of the reflection, that British Juries are able to protect us all—are able to sift the characters of witnesses—to determine what credit is due to them—listening to men of good character without any impression against their evidence—listening to men, such as I have stated, with a strong impression against their evidence; that impression, however, to be beat down by the concurrent unsuspicious testimony arising out of the rest of the case, if, upon the whole, you should find the case to be made out as I have stated to you.

"Gentlemen, I forgot to mention to you, that you will likewise find, about the time that this Convention was talked of, that there was a new constitution framed for the Corresponding Society, in which they speak of a Royalist as an enemy to the liberties of his country—of a Democrat as a friend to the liberties of his country; and you will find, that, in a constitution again revised, the whole was thrown into a scheme, and into a system, which was to add physical strength to the purposes of that Convention, which was, I submit to you, to assume all civil and political authority.

"If you find all these things, and, if under the direction of that wisdom that presides here, with respect to which, Gentlemen, let me say again, that the situation of this country is indeed reduced to a most miserable one, if the respect, which is due to the administration of the law is suffered to be weakened in any manner, if the respect which is due to the administration of the law, that administration, which perhaps is the best feature of the constitution, under which we live, is destroyed, miserable indeed must be the situation of your country! If you find under that direction that the case, being proved in fact, is also made out in law, you will do that on behalf of the public which is due to Yourselves, to the Public, and to your Posterity, and theirs.

"But on the other hand, if, after hearing this case fully stated, and attempted to be fully proved, you should be of opinion that it is not proved, or you should be finally of opinion that the offence is not made out according to the *Kallowed* interpretation of the statute of Edward III, I say then, in the conclusion, I join from my heart, in the prayer which the law makes on behalf of the prisoner, God send the prisoner a safe deliverance!"

Lord Eldon, it will not be contested, is signally qualified to preside, as now he does, in the Court of Equity. His legal information is extensive and profound, his attention to cases is vigilant and unwearied, and his attachment to justice is as inflexible as his penetration in the discovery of truth is admirable. This is his praise. He is an honour to the laws which it is his important business to administer.

ORIGINAL COMMUNICATIONS.

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE ELECTRA OF SOPHOCLES AND THE HAMLET OF SHAKSPEARE.

*BY THE AUTHOR OF THE ESSAYS ON THE NATIONAL VARIETIES OF THE DRAMA**.

THE tragedies of Electra and Hamlet will, at first sight, appear to bear a strong resemblance to each other in the principal incidents on which they are constructed. In each of them a monarch has fallen a victim to the vicious attachment of his queen, and to the ambition of her paramour; but in the Grecian story the murder is publicly known, while in Shakspeare it is concealed, and only promulgated by the suspicious and uncertain testimony of supernatural intelligence. This gives our British bard such advantages, as his genius only could have improved into their due effect. He introduces us to a young man of a generous and lively spirit, whose vivacity and whose best passions are absorbed in the gloom of suspicion: love itself is extinguished by his filial solicitude: all the energies of his mind are directed to the discovery of the certainty of this horrid suggestion, and to the vengeance which such a murder demands; while his remaining affection for his mother makes him view her share of the guilt with a terrific tenderness that "*speaks daggers*" indeed to her conscience. What a multitude of claims has such a youth to our interest! with what mental agonies does he excite our commiseration!

Nor is the principal character of the drama of Sophocles less worthy of our concern.—Electra's love and reverence for the memory of her father, and her deep abhorrence of her mother's crimes; her sufferings, her constancy, her anxiety for the coming of Orestes, make us at once admire the energies of her resolutions, and participate in her expectations.—Her character would be more generally understood by a public audience than that of Hamlet: her situation, though delicate, is more decided; the cause and object of her pious vengeance are clearly defined. On the contrary,

* Mr. N. feels highly gratified by the approbation with which his two Essays have been received, and interrupts the course of their continuation only to pursue it with more vigour and more perspicuity of arrangement in the future numbers of *Le Beau Monde*.

in the mind of Hamlet, both his motives and his plan are undetermined: his generous soul reluctantly surrenders itself to suspicion, although supported by supernatural testimony. This is manifest by the passage "*The spirit that I have seen*," &c.; and again, where he desires Horatio to watch the countenance of his uncle during the exhibition of the conscience-trying play, "*if his occult soul*," &c.—Even when his suspicions are strengthened into convictions, we find him chiding his irresolution: his means of vengeance are overwhelmed with obstacles; he is unable to imagine the execution of his purposes; and we at length behold the catastrophe brought about rather by one of those hidden interferences of Providence which we denominate chance, than by the deliberate intention of a son revenging the death of his father.

Of these two characters, therefore, that of Hamlet seems to require the most judgment, the most intimate knowledge of the heart, the most expressive delineation, and the most delicate management, to bring its concealed features to the light, and to make it a favourite with a mixed audience, many of whom would otherwise enter too slowly into the nice discriminations of such internal feelings. On the other hand, Electra appears to want little aid from the art of the poet: the most uncultivated mind can feel with her and for her: her soul is open to every eye, and her sentiments are congenial to every bosom.

When we consider what the customs of the drama in each country demanded of either author, we must acknowledge that the genius of Shakspeare possessed the greatest liberty. He had no precedent to follow; no unities to preserve; no chorus to introduce. He had nature and an historical event before him, which it was his business to represent in the strongest and most interesting manner possible. He was circumscribed neither to time nor to place: the limits of the actions to be described were his only boundaries. But not so the Grecian: we find him condemned to an established form: his scene occupied by a monotonous chorus, for whom he must provide moral songs, and opportunities of interfering with the conduct of his characters. This chorus he could neither move from place to place, nor yet keep very long, awake and fasting, on the same spot. He could therefore exhibit no more of his subject than what he could with any degree of probability crowd into one spot, and into a short period of time. Under these circumstances we perceive that the author of Electra had need of considerable art, since he was to compress, but not to violate, the truth of nature. Art, however, when once so firmly admitted, ever seeks to extend its empire: the vanity of the human mind, when it is suffered to set boundaries to nature will speedily presume to direct her; and having had the audacity to say to her, "In such a place, and in such a time, shalt thou complete thy action," will not hesitate to add, "such shall be thy agents and so shall they act." The truth of this is apparent in many of the Grecian dramas, and I have endeavoured to select one for comparison with our immortal bard, that encroaches as little as possible on probability.

The tragedy of Electra opens with the arrival of Orestes and his tutor at Argos; they are accompanied by Pylades, the friend of Orestes, who, however, does not utter a word in any scene. The first speech of the tutor determines both the place and the time of action.

Son of that king of armies against Troy,
Great Agamemnon's offspring! here thou view'st
What thou so oft hast long'd to gaze upon.
Here ancient Argos (thy perpetual wish)
Lifts its proud walls: hither spreads the grove
Of Inachus's fury-smitten daughter;
Here, my Orestes, the lyceum stands
Devoted to the Lycoctonian god:
That on the left is Juno's famous temple:
Before us, see Mycenæ, great in wealth;
And here the court of the Pelopidæ,
Replete with slaughter. Hence (thy father slain)
I from thy sister's kindred hands received thee,
Preserv'd thee, rear'd thee up to manhood's strength,
The bold avenger of thy father's blood!
Now, my Orestes, and Pylades too,
(Thou dearest of our inmates) it is time
To fix upon the manner of our deed.
Already the bright solar beams appear,
And wake the morning music of the birds:
Dark night, with all its glimmering stars expires.
Ere any one is seen to leave his home,
Let us consult together. Where we are
Sloth hath no longer place, but instant action.

Orestes replies and explains their stratagem for obtaining admission into the palace of his mother and Ægisthus her paramour. At the same time, fearful of degrading the character of Orestes, the poet makes him declare that he becomes the private assassin of his father's murderers by the command of the oracle.

That not in arms with honest front of war,
But with deceit and secresy to strike
The merited destruction.

He then details their plot, and we immediately perceive the absurdity of one of the boasted unites. Is it probable that Orestes should have delayed to specify his plan to his friends, until his arrival at the very palace gates of Ægisthus?—Shakespear would have introduced him concealing the urn which contained his supposed ashes, at some distance in the woods; or have given us an interesting scene at the tomb of Agamemnon, where this detail of his designs might have dilated itself into actual circumstances. The first scene, however, concludes with an affecting trait of fraternal tenderness, worthy the great poet of sensibility.

Electra (*within*).—"Ah! woe is me! alas, my wretched fate!"

Tutor.—"Haste, haste, my sons: I think within the gates
"Some one of the attendants sighs aloud."

Orestes.—"May it not be *Electra*, wretched maid!
"Shall we not listen here one moment more,
"And mark that sound of sorrow?"

On the departure of *Orestes* and his friends, *Electra* enters. If the voice of *Electra* had not been heard previously, by which the audience is led to expect her, we should have had an instance of what the French critics term *a vacant stage*: this the tragedians of that nation were careful to avoid; and even in writing remarks to Corneille's comedy called *Le Menteur*, we find Voltaire very particular in noticing an instance of this sort. *Le theatre* (he says) *ne reste pas tout à fait vuide; les acteurs qui entrent sont du moins annoncés*. Trifles like these are beneath the attention of a real poet, and never enter the mind of him who has nature before his eyes.

Electra enters and is soon followed by the chorus, which consists of Argive Virgins. In a beautiful soliloquy she describes her feelings and her situation. Yet in this soliloquy, and in the conversation with the chorus which follows it, we perceive rather too much of the poet himself. In the numerous soliloquies of *Hamlet*, we find nothing but the ebullitions of overbearing sensations; but in those of *Electra*, we see Sophocles himself contending for the dramatic prize with all the softest charms of figurative poetry. The following imitation of her soliloquy is given with diffidence.

"All-fostering light, and thou, soft ambient air,
"As far extending as the fertile earth,
"The many moanings of my griefs—the blows
"Re-echoing frequent from my bleeding breast
"Hast thou not felt, what time each shadowy night
"Departed sleepless from me; and my couch,
"Hateful and curst, within this mournful dome
"Stood conscious of the wailings that deplored
"A murdered father!—Him not Mars received
"With sanguine welcome on a barbarous shore,
"But she (my mother!) and the wretch *Ægisthus*
"Who shares her couch, cleft, with a bloody axe,
"His honoured head, as those who fell an oak.
"Yet these thy dreadful obsequies affect
"None, none but me! tho' thou, my father, liest
"So piteously mangled in thy tomb!
"But I will never cease my loud laments,
"Nor to pour forth the anguish of my tears,
"While I may view the fulgent stars of eve
"Or radiant morning.—No!—like some lorn bird,
"Reft of her nestlings, I will make my moan,
"And thro' these sad paternal portals spread,
"The long reverberated voice of woe!
"O, race of *Hades* and *Persephone*!
"O, *Hermes* wide pervading this vile earth!
"O, fearful imprecation and ye furies,
"Tremendous daughters of the wrathful gods,
"Look upon those who sink in unjust death—
"O! look on those who wrong the nuptial bed!
"Be present! aid my hopes! avenge, avenge
"My father's murder!—Bring my brother to me!
"I can no longer, thus alone, sustain
"This heavy, overbalanc'd, beam of woe!

The Chorus enter and endeavour to soothe the sorrows of *Electra*. She confides in their regard; and her character rises throughout the scene, in which we perceive her fortitude, oppressed as it is by her sufferings under the tyranny of her mother, still adhering strenuously to the principle of vengeance. Soft and feminine tenderness is nevertheless retained in all she utters. Here is the vengeance of pious sentiments: it is the vengeance of the most gentle and amiable passions, that thus impels her resolution: it is very different from the cold and deadly eagerness of malice or brutality. The following expression depicts the nature of her grief and desire of revenge.

Infirm of mind is he who can forget
His kindred, dying by the murderer's hand!
How pleasing to my sickening soul appears

That lamentable bird, Jove's messenger,
Who Itys, Itys, without ceasing, mourns!
O Niobe! in every thing most wretched!
Yet thee, as a divinity, I worship,
For e'en within the marble sepulchre,
Thou, sacred mourner, dost retain thy tears!

In the commencement of these lines we observe some resemblance of the exclamation of Hamlet

. . . . . remember thee!
Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe;—remember thee!—
Yea, from the tablet of my memory
I'll wipe away all trivial records, &c. &c. .

But we observe that Shakespeare's sentiment is more particular, and grows more directly out of the incident; while that of Sophocles is more general, and seems rather to demand our admiration than our sympathy.

The lamentations of Electra, with the consolatory admonitions of the chorus, having continued uninterrupted for a long space of time (more than half the duration of an act of a modern tragedy), they are broken in upon by Chrysothemis, the more submissive sister of Electra. It is remarkable that we find few direct contrasts of character in Shakspeare: he drew with such a force of colouring, as required not the excited lustre of comparison. It is not real excellence that requires a foil to set it off: it is only a moderate beauty who seeks to improve her charms by placing herself in contact with ugliness. Wherever Shakspeare has admitted that contrariety of character, which often gives additional strength to either object, he does it with such delicacy that the effect, but not the opposition, strikes the minds of the spectators. In the historical play of Henry VIII. we find the characters of Cardinal Wolsey and Queen Catherine in direct contrast to each other; the contrasted traits are even rendered more plain by similarity of situation, yet very few either in the closet or the theatre are led to make the comparison. It is not so with Electra and Chrysothemis: the contrast is prominently displayed to the dullest spectator, and the author seems to demand approbation for his skill in putting together those mechanical springs which ought to be concealed. This will ever be the case where the emulation of surpassing any rival author, or the habit of bowing to systematic criticism, overcomes that attention to nature which genius should ever preserve. The character of Chrysothemis is nevertheless interesting: she is affectionate, but she wants fortitude: she detests the crimes of her mother, but she dreads the idea of irritating so powerful an adultress.

Chrysothemis is introduced as carrying some expiatory oblations to the tomb of her father, from her mother Clytæmnestra. This excites the astonishment of Electra, who, in severe terms, has rebuked the meanness of her sister's submissive temper: she therefore desires to know the cause of this extraordinary symptom of piety in the murderess.

Chrys. My mother sends me to my father's tomb,
With these oblations.
Electra. Ah! what mean thy words?
To him! most hated of mankind! to him—
Chrys. To him she slew:—this is what thou would'st say.
Electra. What friend hath urged her to this piety?
Who can take pleasure in this hallowed deed?
Chrys. Some terror of the night, I think, impels her.
Electra. Paternal gods! give token of your aid!
Chrys. From her nocturnal dream what hope hast thou?
Electra. Tell me her vision, thou shalt hear my hopes.
Chrys. A few brief words are all that I have learnt.
Electra. O let me know them. Oft a few brief words
Have overturned or fixed the fates of heroes.
Chrys. It is reported that she hath beheld
The renovated form of our dead father,
Returning yet again beneath this sky.
That in the palace, having seized the sceptre,
Which formerly himself was used to bear,
But now Agisthus bears, he planted it,
And from it straightway spread extensive branches,
That shadowed all the region of Mycenæ.
This just as I've related I have heard
From one, who while she to the morning sun
Confessed her vision, in her presence stood.

From this passage we may elicit an excellent lesson for those dealers in visions and ghostly agents, who have in the present day taken possession of the stage. The best writers, and particularly those who drew immediately from nature, have considered these preternatural beings as existences in the minds only of those, who having their imaginations heated by

terror, remorse, or suspicion, seem to behold them. They are never introduced as actual agents independent of the mental suggestions of some of the principal characters. The appearance of the Ghost of Hamlet's father strongly depicts the suspicion, which pervaded the soldiery, of his death by treacherous means. This, though not directly communicated by them to Hamlet, who would be loth to suspect his mother of such a murder, has the effect of awakening his mind to such surmises as direct his thoughts to the fullest evidences of the truth. In the interview with his mother he alone beholds the appearance of his father. Her insensibility: the secresy of the deed: her elevated rank: her continual enjoyment of the objects of her desire; all tend to stupify a conscience, which seems naturally to have very little sentiment to sustain it. During the short interval of remorse which Hamlet excites in her, she has not time or power to figure to her soul an image which had never made any strong impression on her intellect: an intellect under the direction of instinct rather than imagination. To the observations of Mr. Cumberland, in the Observer, concerning the Ghost of Banquo, I refer my reader for an explanation of this opinion in so full and explicit a manner as entirely precludes the necessity of any further disquisition in this place. This I may be permitted to assert, that unless the allegory or emblem, above specified, be preserved in the admission of supernatural agents in the drama, an author may startle the nerves of some romance readers, but will have very little chance of gaining the permanent esteem of an enlightened public.

The Chorus unite with Electra in deducing hopes from the vision of Clytæmnestra; and the adultress herself soon appears on the scene. As a woman whose mind easily liberates itself from the slight terrors of a nocturnal vision, she exhibits no compunction for her crime.—She reviles her daughter for having expressed herself too freely on her conduct, and defends her actions. The arguments of Electra irritate her, but draw from her no symptoms of remorse. There is a bold brutality in her disposition, that strengthens itself by feeble opposition; and being conscious of superior power, tramples down the severe reasoning of Electra. In this scene, and in the interview of Hamlet and his mother, we observe a strong opposition of situations. Gertrude, intimidated by the resolution of her son, and overcome by the strength of his arguments; terrified by the death of Polonius, and at the colloquy of Hamlet with the unseen spirit of his father, while, at the same time, she is sensible of the inefficacy of her means of resistance, yields to the compunctions of conscience. But, Clytœmnestra having pacified her nocturnal terrors by superstitious rites, comes forth in the confidence of her power, combats the arguments of one whom she despises, and extinguishes every sentiment of remorse. Both these scenes are admirable; and the poet who would reach their excellence, must set nature, and nature alone, before him.

The Tutor of Orestes now enters, and according to the plan suggested in the first scene, describes himself as a messenger from Phanoteus of Phocis. In the presence of Electra he tells the Queen that Orestes is dead. There follow immediately a few short speeches from each personage, which exhibit traits exactly consonant to nature. The misery of Electra, who feels the destruction of all her hopes of vengeance in this intelligence, and the eagerness of Clytœmnestra, who perceives therein the termination of all her fears, are beautifully contrasted, and arise so correctly from the situation of the characters, that the idea of art is lost in the feelings they excite.

Tutor.—Orestes is no more: that is my tale.
Electra.—O wretched me! then am I lost indeed!
Clytemn.—What dost thou say, O stranger? speak again—
Speak to me only: listen not to her.
Tutor.—Orestes, as I said before, is dead.
Electra.—I faint!—I perish too!—I now am nothing!
Clytemn.—Hence—silent—to thy labour.—tell me all:
Where—in what manner—did he cease to live.

The Tutor then in a long speech, consisting of more than eighty lines, describes the Delphic Games, with all the circumstances of the supposed death of Orestes. This is certainly unnatural, and must disgust an audience, who know the narration to be false, and, therefore, cannot approve of this fertility of invention in the narrator. There can be no necessity for so very circumstantial a detail: and the Tutor appears rather to shew his skill in framing a long story, than his judgment in giving just so much and no more of a falsehood as might satisfy the enquiries of the Queen. It may be said that the Greeks were enthusiastically fond of their public games, and of hearing them described in an animated manner. Such a plea ought to be very cautiously admitted, since Dramatic Poets, and particularly those of the inferior

class, are eager to catch at pretences for introducing these specious brilliancies, which they are apt to denominate splendours of the imagination, and to rank somewhat above mere nature.

The horror of this tedious narration has, however, its effect: it produces the only trait of sensibility that is displayed by the Queen throughout the Drama. The mangled corse of her son: the urn which contains his ashes: the tomb of her murdered husband, into which it is to be deposited, raise the most forcible images on her mind, and she exclaims.

Clytemn.—O Jove! what mean these pangs? may I call this
The bliss of peaceful safety?—rather woe!
Most direful woe, whatever gain it brings!
O how it wounds my soul, that my own life,
Can only by my tortures be preserved!

Tutor.—What! at my story sinks thy soul in sadness?

Clytemn.—O it is grievous to bring forth a child!
A mother cannot wholly hate her offspring,
Tho' wronged and hated by them!

These compunctious feelings are, however, of very short duration. The recollection of her deliverance from the only person who remained to terify her with threats of vengeance, restores her mind to its wonted strength: she redoubles her insults towards Electra, and conducts the Tutor into the palace as a guest, who has brought her the most interesting and grateful intelligence. The ensuing lamentations of Electra, are beautifully pathetic; but the consolatory discourse of the Chorus is very inadequate to the occasion.

In a future paper, I shall pursue this examination; and point out the characteristics of these two Dramas, as they may appear parallel or dissimilar to each other,

T. N.

ON GOSSIPPING.

A CELEBRATED writer has told us that "the proper study of mankind is man;" and, if we allow the propriety of this maxim, I do not know how we can apply it with more advantage to ourselves and to society, than by holding up to the notice of the world those characters whose virtues we may aspire to possess, or whose frailties we may learn to avoid. Some well meaning people (and those, too, to whose judgment in other respects, we might be disposed to pay some deference) are apt to say that vice only should receive the lash of Satire, and that, as folly neither benefits nor injures mankind, it should be suffered to pass uncensured and unnoticed. To these I would reply, that folly may be productive even of more serious injury to society than vice, from the great prevalence and power of example; for, altho' every person has sufficient discrimination to distinguish vice from virtue, by many folly is unperceived, or even passes for some excellence which deserves our imitation. It, therefore, becomes a duty incumbent on those who pretend to take an interest in the formation and correction of the manners of the present age, to point out those failings which are become dangerous from their example, in proportion as they are distinguished for their practice.

Among those to which I wish particularly to draw the attention of my readers, is one which is commonly distinguished by the appellation of a Gossip. This man, without being productive of any real benefit to the community, often does considerable injury by propagating reports which rest on very slender foundations, or are, perhaps, wholly unsupported by reason or probability. It is not an excuse to say that he has no intention of doing harm to any one, or that he merely repeats the malice of another; every one owes that duty to society which should induce him to consider what effect his representations may have on the opinions of others; and, if it falls not within the limits of his power to be serviceably active to his fellow-creatures, he should be very careful not to violate, either by word or deed, those obligations which all laws, human or divine, have enjoined us to preserve towards one another. To assert a thing which we cannot prove to be true, does not admit of any justification; and, even in trifling affairs, no one can foresee what unpleasant consequences may ensue from this practice. These mischievous persons are generally vain, weak men, who, for want of other employment, busy themselves either in public or private affairs: in the first of which they

have no skill, and in the last no concern. Such an one I shall attempt to describe in the following lines:—

Having risen at a moderate hour in the morning, as the fatigues of the day require a considerable portion of rest, he makes it his business, in the first place, to inform himself what quarter the wind is in, that, in case he should not meet with any other subject of conversation, during the day, he may not be entirely destitute of intelligence. His next care is, after examining the appearance of the sky, if his situation will allow him to do so, to attend his barber, whom he does not choose either for his skill in shaving, or dressing hair, but for the collection of anecdotes which he is able to retail upon these occasions, under the denomination of news; and, as he is not very fastidious respecting the truth of the information, the quantity is generally pretty ample. As this is an operation of no small importance, it occupies a considerable portion of time, and fully employs him till the hour of breakfast. Here he lays in a foundation to support him through the labours of the day, taking occasion, at the same time, to inform himself whether the price of provisions have undergone any material change, or if the actions of his neighbours have afforded him any ground to expatiate on; and he may very probably take a peep occasionally through his blinds to observe what they may be about. Having tied on his cravat, brushed his coat, and taken forth his gold-headed cane, he adjourns to the coffee-house to read the newspapers. Here he gains a fund of intelligence to communicate to his auditors; and, although no important news may be contained in these prints, as is no uncommon case, he will be sure to learn where Mr. C. dined the day before, or whether Lord H. has left town for his country seat; and it is hard if the scandalous column will not afford an anecdote or two of the most interesting nature. A defeat of an army is to him food for three or four days; and a City Meeting conversation for a week. He has now accumulated his stock of news, and accordingly proceeds to the house or shop of the first person whom he has any knowledge of, where he opens his budget. "Good "morning, Mr. ——; fine weather this; the "wind seems to be changed towards the west, "though; and I should not be surprised if it "were to rain before long, for my glass has fallen two-tenths since yesterday. I see you are "on the wing, always busy like me; take your "umbrella with you; you see I have got mine; "always prepared against what may happen; "by the bye, those things are shamefully increased in price; and I am told that it is in "contemplation to lay a new duty on silk.—"Sad news from the continent; bad, very bad; "I am sorry to say, they manage things in "those parts very ill; our wise heads are but "blockheads after all; by the bye, Mr. Addlepate, the tax-gatherer says he thinks we shall "have a new budget after Christmas. God "help the poor, say I; but I see you are in a "hurry; therefore, I won't detain you a minute; yet, now I think on't, have you heard "that Ned Goodfellow is on the eve of bankruptcy; he asked me yesterday to lend him "a trifle; but no, that would not do; not but "that I think the fellow is honest, and has a "good principle; but charity begins at home." "You judge wrong, sir; Mr. Goodfellow has "found a true friend to assist him; and I hope "you will take as much pains to contradict "the report as you have done to circulate it." Concluding from this hint that the patience of his auditor is by this time nearly exhausted, and that he is angry at the interruption, he thinks it best to proceed to some other place, taking care to stop every person he meets in his way for a few minutes chat, however pressing may be the business on which they are going. Perhaps he may drop in at a public office if he has any excuse for so doing, and contrive to engage the time and attention of some persons who may wish in vain to rid themselves of the incumbrance. From hence he may very probably go to call on some other acquaintance, where he begins afresh.—"How d'ye you do, madam; "how is Mr. —— and master Tommy, and miss "Betsy." "All well, sir, and in high spirits; "for we are just going out for an airing."—"Indeed, I hope the air will be of service to "you; are you going towards H—; take care "you discover no secrets; I hear Mr. M—— "has a convenient lodging there; you understand me."—"You are quite mistaken, sir; "it is no such thing, I am convinced."—"Dear "me, how people will talk. You find coach-hire "expensive I suppose; and so indeed is every "thing else; bad times we live in. Did you dine "at Guildhall on Lord-Mayor's Day? The dinner was very sumptuous, the wines excellent, "and the ball more splendid than I have ever remembered before." The arrival of the carriage interrupts the conversation; and, as the lady is not too ceremonious, she makes no apology for leaving him. On his next visit, he has the mortification to observe the servant laying the cloth for dinner; and, although his presence of mind is admirable, repeated hints oblige him to retreat. After a few other visits of the

kind, he returns home to dinner; which important business dispatched, he sleeps till tea-time, which refreshes him sufficiently to attend a club which is held at an ale-house in his neighbourhood. Here affairs of every description, public and private, are canvassed and discussed till, the clock striking eleven, warns them to depart; when he returns home to bed, and rises on the next morning to renew the occupation of the preceding day. Such is the life of a Gossip:—Judge, reader, whether this is a character to imitate or to avoid.

ENGLAND, BY A FOREIGNER.

No. II.

THE more I see, my dear friend, of this wonderful people, the more disposed I am to write their Eulogium; yet, least you should think me too partial, I will shew you by the opinion which others have held of them, that I am not singular in mine, and do this the more readily, as I wish that you should be acquainted with their political and natural character, before we enter on a description of their country, whose peculiarities as well as excellencies proceed in a great measure from the genius of its inhabitants.

The character given of them by the *Abbe du Bois*, (who came here with Marshal Tallard, and resided with him during his captivity, in the reign of William), was received as a flattering compliment by those to whom he addressed it! he had been much beloved and caressed by the nobility, and on his return to the Court of France, he expressed himself with great freedom and candour, saying "that he believ-"ed the English were the happiest people "which the world had ever seen; not only be-"cause they were governed by laws of their "own making, but also, because that the "meanest subject was tried by twelve honest "and impartial individuals of his own rank "and degree in life, in all cases whatever; and "although a King or a Minister of State might "accuse, yet, it was not in their power to "judge, much less to condemn even those "the most unprotected." Even Mezeray, our great historian, made use of a happy expression in a conversation which he had with Mr. Cambden, on the subject of the English Constitution, as you will see it mentioned in the Secret History of Europe of that time.

"O fortunatos nimium, bona si sua norint,"
"Angligenas.

"We had once in France," said he, "the "happiness and privilege of the same kind "as you enjoy; the laws were made by repre-"sentatives of our own choice; our money "could not be taken from our hands but with "our consent; and our Kings were subject "themselves to the laws and to reason. But "alas! this happy state no longer remains; "we are miserable, in having lost it. Believe "me, Sir, that nothing ought to be nearer your "hearts than to preserve these precious advan-"tages; and if occasion should ever require it, "sooner hazard your life, your wealth, and all "that is dear to you, than subject yourselves to "the miserable condition to which we are re-"duced."

It is this happy state of liberty, that gives the English people, the manly boldness, the generous openness which accompany them in all climes and in all situations; and it is the lustre of this precious gem which gives them such a brilliancy at all other courts. It is this manly boldness, remarkable even in their common soldiers, which has so often rendered them victorious; in fact, it is the same greatness of soul, by which the ancien Romans have, in times past, civilized or conquered almost all the world. All those who have been eye-witnesses of the occurrences of *the last war*, are eager to render justice to the English in confessing that all the magnanimous efforts which they have made in concert with their allies, have had no other tendency than to render all mankind as free as themselves, and that they have never shewn the smallest intention of conquest or of subjugation.* Every battle which they have fought, has only been to deliver some miserable slaves from the yoke under which they groan-

* Happy England, if at the commencement of another century, her sons, free and independent as in the present, shall peruse a similar testimony of the present age!

ed, and which they were no longer able to bear; and above all things to re-establish the general tranquillity of Europe. In all cases, wherever the Duke of Marlborough was successful, he was considered rather as a Liberator, than as a Conqueror; he was beloved, nay, adored by all the world, not so much for his gallant fortunes as for his justice, his clemency and his benevolence. With what humanity has he been seen to receive his prisoners? and what marks of pity and compassion has he not shewn to his wounded enemies? in a word, have we not seen even those Provinces far distant from the scene of his victories, begin to raise their dejected heads, in the happy expectation of seeing their chains broken by his gallant armies; however, the profound and impenetrable wisdom of Providence, has thought proper to reserve these unhappy changes for better times, either to punish these degraded States for their crimes, or perhaps through the unhappy divisions of the English nation.

What a melancholy contemplation it would be, if one ever was to see, so equitable and so glorious a constitution destroyed, as that of Rome was by the usurpation of an ambitious *Cæsar*; or to mark its glories, sapped, and at length overturned, like that of Carthage by the malignant counsels of a *Hanno*. A wise man has told us that tyranny glides by insensble degrees into a State, like a slow fever in the human system; that it is at first easy of cure, but difficult to be known; and that when once ascertained, it becomes almost incurable. But there is reason to hope, that *messious les Anglois** will known well how to maintain their Constitution in its pristine security, and that its own internal power and regulations will prevent them from being reudced to the necessity of reforming it. If one, however, was to pay much attention to the opinions of the lower orders of the clergy, with whom I have frequently conversed in the country, and whilst travelling, they would indeed believe that this Constitution was already languishing and much altered; for these gentry call *Revolution*,† *Rebellion*, and assert in high terms that we ought to acknowledge in the Sovereign a Power, which neither the Law of God nor of Man has ever attributed to him, and they teach even from their pulpits, Dogmas, in direct opposition to the foundation and free principle of this Government. But when I came to London, and went afterwards to Tunbridge Wells, I found that these were merely the notions of people of low condition and confined fortunes, who were blinded by personal ambition, and, who in fact, were despised by all that are estimable of the clerical order, which indeed forms a great majority of the Clergy. Those who are of noble extraction, and who have seen the world, know well how to distinguish in opposition to those pedants, who have seen or heard nothing beyond the walls of their colleges.—They know how to support their liberty, as well as the other christian virtues; and as they have acquired more light and more knowledge, than this species of Monks, who, like moles, bury themselves in the dust of the church; they know also, how to discern more distinctly what is just, and what is unjust, and to attach themselves to the Laws of their Country, as well as to those of God, in order to preach them both to their respective parishes. I must confess that I never met with a Clergyman conversant with the world, who was not a friend to the Laws and to the Liberty of the Country; and in the same manner, I have never met with one of these rusticated and ignorant geniuses of whom I have just been speaking, who did not take every opportunity of foisting into our conversation the despotic power of the Church, like the Clergy of Sweden and Denmark, and perhaps for the same reason. For, as these Clergy to accomplish their own designs, have rendered those two nations, though free as they once were, now little better than mere slaves; in the same manner the lower orders of the English Clergy, seem to have nothing in view but to elevate the Ecclesiastical Power of the Church: however, as long as there shall be such a number of wise and zealous Bishops and other Dignitaries, as there are at present, there will be no danger to be apprehended from those fire and faggot men.

After thus initiating you, my dear friend, with the general character of this nation, it is time that I should enter upon my interesting rambles among them. You well remember that in our different tours upon the Continent, where we have met so many of the English, we have often wondered why these people should be themselves so fond of visiting other countries, and of publishing their Travels, and yet that no one among them has ever undertaken to give any description of his own, although universally acknowledged to be worthy of public attention. How often have we said, what pity! that a nation which in our days has made the greatest figure of any in Europe, should yet

* We have preserved this phrase in the original, as in this sense, it is *untranslateable*.

† This alludes of course to the Revolution of 1688.

remain so little known to the world. This was the reason, my dear Sir, which made me promise that as soon as peace should be signed, I would undertake this voyage, and I confess to you that even from what I have already seen, it is well worth the trouble; and I now promise you that I shall not write on trifles, nor shall I trust to books, but shall simply relate to you such things as I have seen, and describe such places only as I have really visited. To begin then, my dear Sir, I must inform you that I took my passage in the packet-boat which sails from the *Brill* twice a week, and in which I was well accommodated though I was obliged to pay very handsomely. We intended to go direct to Harwich, but after beating about for two days, with a foul wind, we could fetch no higher than Yarmouth Roads, where I was very happy to be put on shore, leaving my servant and luggage in the packet, to be landed at the regular port. Yarmouth is a very pretty town, and kept in very neat order, enclosed by an antient wall, and situated between its own harbour and the sea, on a kind of Peninsula; its quay, which faces the main land, presents a charming prospect, being very long, and of considerable breadth, and bordered by a row of well built mansions, with their fronts to the harbour. The streets which are on the side next the sea, are also pretty considerable; 'tis there you meet with the market-place, the church, and a very handsome hospital. What they call here a Yarmouth cart, or coach, is indeed a very comical equipage; it is nothing more than a sledge, drawn by one horse, without any covering whatever, and in which you may be carried all over the town, or even to the sea side, for three-pence. This town sends two Members to Parliament; and, as in Holland, the two Members at present, are both merchants and inhabitants of the place. King Charles II, created a Gentleman of a neighbouring family of the name of Paston, Earl of this place, and by this title they are peers of the realm. I cannot quit Yarmouth without telling you, that I should like it better if the inns were a little more like those in Holland. I had, it is true, a very good bed, but the wine was but so so, and the meat was coarse and fat, and badly dressed.

I intended to have travelled post to Harwich, but hearing that the famous Bury fair would be held the ensuing week, I resolved to proceed by that route, and for a moderate sum hired a carriage, which in a day and a half carried me to that town across a country the most agreeable in the world, well cultivated and cloathed with oaks like a forest. Bury, which is reckoned the Montpelier of England, is seated on a commanding eminence, which gives it extensive prospects into the surrounding country.—There are here a great number of families of the gentry*, and a number of handsome inns, which are, however, little used, except for the equipages and attendants of the nobility and gentry *(de la grande et petite noblesse)* when they come to the town. Even the better kind of citizens are too proud to lodge there. There are also two good coffee-houses, but there is only one tavern for the people of the town.

I have been much pleased in viewing the ruins of an immense abbey, and two very large and handsome churches. Between the abbey and the town is an extensive plain, called Angel Hill, where the fair is held: here also are all the best houses of the gentry built round the extremities of this plain, and it is in the midst of these that the company assemble in booths to enjoy the annual festivity. This fair lasts fifteen days, and all the nobility and gentry of the town and neighbourhood assemble here in the evenings to enjoy the sport, to see the shows, and attend the auctions and raffles, to a late hour: sometimes they go to the play, and from that to a ball or assembly, which is held in rotation at the houses of some of the gentlemen of the town, as long as the fair continues. I must confess that I have never seen, in any part of the world, a more elegant assemblage of beauty than at this fair, and it seldom terminates without producing two or three weddings, and sometimes as many intrigues; it is, in fact, rather a fair for the ladies than for merchants' wares. Strangers are here always well received, and *we knight errants* have many favourable opportunities for pleasant adventures. The Duke and Duchess of Grafton, Lord and Lady Cornwallis, Lord and Lady Harvey, and the family of the late Lord Germaine (Jermyn) are constantly the ornaments of this fair, without reckoning an infinity of gentlemen's daughters, who are brought here as to a market; as well as the Earls of Suffolk and of Cambridge. I mingled the pleasures of the fair with the charms of the neighbourhood, of which I shall give you a short description in my next letter; in the mean time believe, that even the delights of this charming country shall never usurp your place in the heart of

Your's, *B.*

* *Noblesse* in the original.

PATRIOTISM OF LONDON.

AMONG those virtues which tend to elevate human nature to the highest degree of excellence that mortality is capable of attaining, none is more distinguished (whether we consider how seldom it is to be found, or the beneficial effects which may result from it) than patriotism. So pure and disinterested are its real properties, that we are disposed to consider all those as impostors who aspire to so enviable a distinction, and mankind have had but too great reason to cherish this opinion, when they have so continually seen it used as a ladder to assist the rapid strides of ambition, which have no sooner attained the summit of their wishes than it is cast away, or only removed to afford a similar aid to the designs of others. True patriotism is rarely (if ever) to be found in an individual; or if the seeds of this virtue spring within the bosom, they are soon choaked and destroyed by the allurements of power, influence, or wealth—that firmness and constancy which alone can ensure a continuance of it, yield to the temptations of favourable opportunities, and patriotism is thrown aside like an old garment, which, having done the possessor all the service of which it was capable, is deserted as a thing no longer useful. Yet if this *amor patriæ*, this love of our country, no longer warms the bosoms of individuals, let us not think that it has ceased to exist. That patriotism which inspired our ancestors, when they obtained for us those rights and liberties which we still enjoy; which prompted the brave peasants of Switzerland, under the auspices of the immortal William Tell, to throw off the yoke of their oppressors; or which, in more modern times, enabled the Americans to resist the power of Great Britain with success, in defence of their privileges, is still to be found in every united people whose ardour is nourished by the emulation which animates every breast, when an adequate occasion calls forth the energies of a nation. Let us hope that such is the flame which has kindled in the hearts of the brave Spaniards, and that its influence may endure with a power sufficiently able and effective to baffle and destroy every attempt which may be made to extinguish the sacred fire.

Although it too often falls to the lot of writers to wield the lash of satire, or the rod of correction, it is a much more pleasing task to commend and praise, when the actions of the world will allow them to do so with justice: and if the City of London have been frequently censured for their servility, or ridiculed for their folly, it is a duty no less incumbent to extol their liberality, which is unsparingly exercised, whenver a suitable occasion calls forth their practice of this virtue. The asylums for the wretched and unfortunate of every description, which have been, and still are, founded by their generosity and compassion, are the wonder of foreigners, and will be the admiration of after ages; and the sums which are annually expended for the education of youth, and the attainment of mechanical knowledge, are no less entitled to esteem.—The Patriotic Fund at Lloyd's is a monument to their praise, and more durable than marble or brass, and their beneficence will live in the bosoms of those widows and orphans, who would have been cast destitute on the mercy of a fickle world, where they might have languished out their days in misery and want, or perhaps have flown to guilt to relieve themselves from the horrors of poverty, had they not been rescued from these dangers by this charitable fund. Let the gratitude of these poor creatures speak their praise in the pure language of unsophisticated nature.

When the distresses and privations to which the Spaniards were subjected (in their noble struggle against the unprincipled invader of their rights and liberties) were made known to a British public, a meeting was instantly convened by some of the principal inhabitants of the City of London, to consider of the propriety of opening a subscription for the relief of these unhappy people. To their praise be it said, that the impulse was immediately hailed by reciprocal feelings in the patriotic inhabitants, and the sums instantly contributed, cannot fail to have a beneficial effect, whether we consider the influence which they must possess, in convincing the suffering Spaniards of the interest we feel in the success of their efforts, or the impression which the enemy of Europe will receive from hence of the unanimity that prevails among us, whenever the object in view inspires us with an universal sentiment, let the occasion of it be what it may.

No party spirit, no selfish recrimination, disgraced the meeting, but the most perfec

harmony, joined to the soundest conception of the advantages which would ensue, both to the cause of the Spaniards and the peace of the world, from their endeavours, rendered it as much distinguished for its propriety as for its liberality, and such beneficial arrangements were adopted, that they might be enabled to co-operate in the assistance afforded by the government of the country, without assuming to themselves an exclusive power; which would have inspired jealousies and doubts in the minds of many, lest their exertions should have been founded rather on vain-glory than in any sincere wish to relieve the necessities of the Spaniards.

Yet while we bestow unlimited praise on the motives by which they have been actuated, we cannot forbear remarking, that the manner in which their bounty is sometimes applied, does not accord with the intended purpose, and more particularly with regard to the Patriotic Fund. When this was first set on foot, it was generally understood that the contributions were to be applied to the relief of the widows and orphans of those who might fall in the defence of their country; and it is generally admitted that these only have a just claim to the benefit of it. It is painful, therefore, to observe that the money, which should dry the tears of the widow, or protect the helpless innocence of the orphan, is expended in presenting expensive swords or vases to persons, who (however well they may deserve them) must be conscious that the cost of them might have been applied in a manner more grateful to the feelings of the nation, and certainly far more congenial to the cause of humanity. When the Corporation of the City of London have, on all occasions, shewn themselves so eager to express their sense of the merits of those commanders, whose services entitle them to the gratitude of the public, surely the honour of voting these rewards might have been reserved for them, and the more widely-extended circle of patriotic contributions have been employed to alleviate the sufferings of those to whom a victory furnishes only matter of regret.

Let us hope, therefore, that no such ill-judged profusion may be used in expending the contributions for the relief of the Spaniards, but let them be applied to the sole purpose for which they were raised—to relieve the necessities of a brave yet suffering people; and the voice of a grateful nation, and of an admiring public, will no less applaud the liberality of the contributors, than the firm and judicious conduct of those who may have conducted the expenditure. *E.*

SUNDAY MORNINGS.

Every twentieth pace
Conducts the unguarded nose to such a whiff
Of stale debauch, forth issuing from the styes
That law has licensed, as makes temperance real!—*The Task.*

SUCH solicitude is shewn in this country, and most commendably shewn, for the due preservation of social order, that the object of my present lucubration will doubtless excite some surprise. It is, notwithstanding, designed to expose an evil, which, to borrow the emphatic description of oratory, "has increased, "is increasing, and ought to be diminished." How this evil has so long escaped public animadversion, or, if at all noticed, why it has not been remedied, are questions for which there appears no satisfactory solution.

Since it is solemnly enjoined us to "keep "holy the Sabbath Day;" and since, comformably with this important injunction, such numbers of our fellow subjects constantly repair on this day to the temples of religion, is it not desirable to remove every obstruction to their ready performance of its duties? It becomes of consequence, then, that our streets, at least, for some short hours, should be sedulously cleared of any thing that tends to disgust the delicate or perplex the peaceful, passenger in the way to our churches, chapels, and meetings. What, nevertheless, is the actual state of the streets of London during even the morning hours appropriated to Divine Service?—Almost at every step, and at the precise period of time when families are hastening to obey the summons of religion, "the styes which law has licensed"

are necessarily disgorged of the miserable or desperate wretches who have been permitted to wallow, during the previous portion of the morning, in all the beastliness of intoxication; and, of whom too many, not only render it impossible for any respectable woman to walk alone to church, but absolutely endeavour to annoy, if not to abuse, every decently dressed person who chances to come in unavoidable contact with them. Such are the SUNDAY MORNINGS of our metropolis!

Without entering into the discussion of the merits of the proceedings of the SOCIETY FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF VICE, let me entreat their attention to the crying nuisance I have just described, as one which calls for their immediate and efficient interference; and for whose removal they would deserve the warmest thanks of the truly respectable part of society. I am sure they will do well to attend to this hint.

Some regulation, it strikes me, might be carried into effect, by which publicans should be compelled, under severe penalties in cases of disobedience, not to open their houses till after the expiration of the Morning service of the Church of England. This would be productive of consequences the most salutary. Not only would it free the streets of our metropolis during the early hours of the sabbath, from dissolute and drunken persons, but it would also constrain the lower orders of men to repair to divine service, even as an amusement, or else to remain soberly in the bosom of their families at home. So situated, they would have time to recover themselves from the dissipation of the previous night; and might, from this circumstance, find themselves enabled to resist the renewal of their destructive orgies. Health and decency, and property, the welfare of individuals and the comfort of the community, are alike interested in the suggestions which I have here proposed to general attention.

CIVIS.

HINTS TO THE FASHIONABLE WORLD.

FOR THE YEAR 1809.

THE termination of an old year, and the commencement of a new one, has been, from time immemorial, hailed with joy, as a season of festivity and rejoicing, when the cares of business give way to the enjoyment of pleasure, and the rights of hospitality are exercised without restraint or reserve. But as these things, (so invariably practised) have long since grown into a custom, without producing any real benefits (since, not even their antiquity will entitle them to the notice of the learned) it is time for those who call themselves the *enlightened* reformers of an *enlightened* age, to discourage every attempt which may be made to continue so barbarous a custom; and by their example to set such a pattern to the world, of refined and elegant manners, as may induce them to adopt a more liberal mode of conduct; and, should they not succeed in making many converts to their new system, they will at least have the satisfaction of knowing that they have done their duty; and they may then look down with contempt on those narrow-minded souls, whose absurd prejudices against all innovation, induce them to continue in that state of ignorance and obscurity in which their ancestors wasted their lives and fortunes. If their influence should extend so far, they may propose a reformation of this kind in the legislature, but not unless they can procure the support of some able speakers; in which case (let the termination of the subject be what it may) the arguments which must necessarily be used in the progress of the debate, cannot fail to have a due influence in the minds of the liberal and unprejudiced part of society. But, as this can be only put into execution under certain circumstances, I shall confine myself in this paper to enforce the propriety of their supporting, by their example, those alterations in the ancient system, which would expand the ideas and sentiments of mankind; and cause them to regard this season of the year in a manner far different from that to which they have been hitherto accustomed.

To you, then, my Lords, Ladies, and Gentlemen, Honourables and Right Honourables, you, who call yourselves the sovereign arbiters of fashion, the regulators of taste, or the judges of merit, to you let me submit a few hints on the subject of reforming the public taste, in a matter where it has been so much perverted; and, if my representations should have the desired effect (as for the sake of society it is much to be wished that they may) a mutual benefit

cannot fail to arise, both to you, who will be the reformers (in contemplating the great advantages which you have been the means of promoting) and to the reformed, as they become gradually convinced of the excellencies of that system which your example will have been the cause of establishing.

Although the season of gaiety is scarcely commenced in London, and but few of the fashionable world are, therefore, to be found in the precincts of St. James's or St. George's, yet, should any stragglers be resident in town at this period, let them leave it with all possible expedition, and retire to some place where they may not be heard of till the holidays, at least, are expired. Nothing can be so dangerous as to appear to patronize or sanction, by your presence, those amusements which are brought forward to entertain the vulgar at this period; as, for example, if you were to look in at the Theatre, people would instantly suppose that you came to see the new pantomime; at an exhibition, you would meet only the canaille of the city; and, if you lounge down St. James's-street (unless you were very well known) you might be quizzed by the waiters at the hotels, as some journeyman taylor who had got a holiday to go a boxing; or, at best, you would be taken for a solitary black-leg sauntering about for want of more profitable employment

This leads me to a recollection of a *boxing-day*, as it is vulgarly termed; and, as it is already passed, I can only hope, that, if you were in London, you confined yourself closely to the house at that time; for, although you might be pestered with a thousand applications for Christmas Boxes from watchmen, lamplighter, beadle, chimney-sweeper, or any such impertinent gentry, you might still console yourself with the idea that it is better to receive their applications in this manner, than to have been accosted in the street; when, by denying yourself the privilege of going abroad, you can also deny them the privilege of a Christmas-box; and this you may consider as a species of philanthrophy exercised towards them; for, had they the means (as you might justly argue) they would plunge into riot and excess: whereas, if persons would strictly observe your new system, the emptiness of their pockets would oblige them to preserve a temperance, no less serviceable to their health, than to the peace and quietness of the inhabitants of their neighbourhood. Nay, were you not to exercise this salutary refusal, they might literally turn it into *boxing-day*; and, however you may admire *boxing*, under certain restrictions, as a *scientific and refined amusement*, I presume you would be loth to be a performer in such an action as the event of a boxing-day might produce.

Should you be at Bath, Cheltenham, or any other watering-place, I would advise you instantly to retreat to your country seat (*if you have one*) or if not, to any other place which will suit your inclination or *ability*; for festivity is as much the disgrace of the country as of the metropolis, and should therefore be as much discouraged. If you should be compelled to continue at any of these places, do not let it be known that you are there, but confine yourself wholly within doors, or people will entertain an idea that you enjoy the amusements which are going forwards, and will follow your example accordingly.

Let your residence be where it may, never pass any of those compliments which are used by some old-fashioned people at this time, as "the compliments of the season to you;" or "I wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year;" or any thing of the kind; for with whatever degree of sincerity some may make use of them, such motives could never influence you, and as forms of politeness, they have long been exploded by the fashionable world.

Never alter your dress at this time, but wear the worst of every thing you have; this, at times, may be convenient, and should therefore be attended to; not that I think your example, in this respect, will ever be followed by the vulgar, who like to have a new coat or gown at Christmas; for one of their maxims is, that "a proud back is better than a proud belly," yet, at this season of the year especially, I believe they are fond of both.

Should you be confined to your country seat (or to any other *seat in the country*, which, of course, you may style a *country seat*) do not encourage the poor people about you in making rejoicings, feastings, or bonfires; but (if you have the power) suppress them entirely: for although their murmurs may be loud, they will also be unavailing, and you may plug your ears with cotton or wool for the time. Never distribute any money at this time, for it will only tend to preserve a remembrance of former days; and if the weather shousd be severe, or provisions dear, they may, by this means, learn to subsist on a little, and in time they will be sufficiently hardened to endure the rigour of cold and want; or if some few indeed should perish in the attempt, your enlightened mind will induce you to persist in your determination; for, though it may be the cause of

some feel distress at first, it will in time procure them and you incalculable advantages.

During this period, if you, Madam, should be inclined to have the vapours, let me recommend a course of novel reading to you: in this delightful employment you will find your feelings interested by the distresses of the imaginary characters which they represent, or the oppressions of the iron ages of romance may melt your tender bosom into sympathy, for the sufferings of those who groaned beneath the yoke of tyranny—and to you, Sir, a consultation with your steward on the propriety of raising your rents, an hour's conversation with your attorney on the subject of distraining for arrears, or threatening some poor fellow with imprisonment, who may have caught a hare on your manor, will employ you very profitably till dinner time, when the enjoyments of the table will leave no *vacuum* for any other amusement.

Some other useful reflections might perhaps be advanced in furtherance of this most desirable system, but as what has already been said may form the groundwork of your structure, I shall leave it to your own judgment and discretion to supply the necessary appendages to render it complete, only observing that the utmost diligence and activity (of which fashionable people are capable) should be used to destroy those absurd prejudices which are always revived at this season of the year; and I shall indulge the hope that, ere long, your exertions will be duly appreciated, and the antiquated customs of our forefathers (as long preserved by us) will at length be entirely eradicated.

R. S. E.

THE ARBITRATOR.—No. XIV.

EDINBURGH REVIEW.

Nature has made man's breast no windows,
To publish what he does within doors,
Nor what dark secrets there inhabit,
Unless his own rash folly blab it.—HUDIBRAS.

THERE is something deserving attention in the character of the twenty-fifth number of the EDINBURGH REVIEW, of which I am now to render the customary arbitratorial account. With the exception of three cases of delinquency, and of these two are not strictly native offences, an uncommon feeling of mildness pervades most of the judgments delivered by our northern court of criticism. All is consideration, and sympathy, and gentleness, and loving-kindness! Antipathy has lost its acrimony, commiseration is extended to charity, and benevolence is become bountiful. The millenium of literature seems to be approaching.

Since, therefore, our critical conquerors have resolved to become as much applauded for clemency, as they have been dreaded for severity, let authors take heart! I would not, indeed, encourage them to confide in a complete cessation of former hostilities, but I earnestly hope they will avail themselves of this convention of criticism; and rejoice in a suspension of the warfare to which they were exposed. Though they cannot promise themselves a peace, let them triumph even in a truce.

Is there not, however, some treachery in this unexpected pacification to the republic of letters? Writers have not lately ventured numerously into the field; and may not this forbearance, on the part of their foes, be no other than a stratagem to allure them again to the contest? Be this as it may, still the Reviewers of Edinburgh must somehow shew themselves; they cannot altogether refrain from indulging in their accustomed spirit of visitation. Having spared books, they have taken vengeance on states. Is there wisdom, notwithstanding, in thus shifting their cynical spleen? They soared into notice chiefly because they uniformly treated authors with hypercritical asperity; and their readers, should these reviewers continue their newly moderated style of admonition, may, very shortly, become seriously dissatisfied. Let our northern foe-men attend to this conjecture. Ambitious as they feel, and in many respects meriting the distinction to which they aspire, they would not be gra-

tified, one may suppose, to find the *Edinburgh Review* superseded even by the *Satirist*. I hope, therefore, that they will take this hint in good part. Diana is in danger.

There are three objects, to the accomplishment of which the exertions of the EDINBURGH REVIEW are incessantly directed.—Evidently they are desirous to contribute to effect a PARLIAMENTARY REFORM, and to produce CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION; nor can it be doubted by any one who attentively scrutinises their sentiments, that they earnestly wish, and even hope, to see the GRENVILLE MINISTRY again advanced into power in this country. I do not say that such are the only objects which these reviewers have fully in their contemplation, though they appear to me to be their principal ones. As subordinate points indeed, and still collateral with main matters, they may aim, in the character of *Scotch Critics*, entirely to discourage, by frequently depreciating, *English Literature*; and they may also affect, as *Cosmopolites*, to extol the talents and admire the ascendancy of *Bonaparte*! I do not affirm that things are exactly in this predicament; but, for aught by me discerned to the contrary, the case is not impossible.

It seems of real importance, then, that the speculations of our Edinburgh Encyclopedists, like those of their renowned parisian precursors, obtain considerable circulation through all classes of the civilised community; that these quarterly disquisitions are not confined to the *long-heads* of the north, but most liberally communicated to the *round-heads* of the south, for whose illumination they are doubtless designed! He who runs, may now read; and it is no less easy for him to understand the drift of what these gentlemen so studiously inculcate. Without wishing by any means to circumscribe the province of political philosophy, or in the least to limit the freedom of general discussion, I cannot avoid regretting the manner in which the most momentous subjects are too often agitated; and feeling something like high-minded commiseration for those who sacrifice common candour, that they may maintain the reputation of individual consistency. Truth should always be preferred to opinion. To misrepresent and mislead, to perplex facts and pervert judgment, ought not to be the objects of legitimate enquiry.

So steadily do the Edinburgh Reviewers adhere to opinions which they at first promulged, so systematic are they in sentiments and so open is their avowal of them, that their dogmas pop upon one in almost every page of their publication. Scarcely has the reviewer introduced the *Memoirs of the life of Colonel Hutchinson* to his readers, and this occasions the first article in the twenty-fifth part of the EDINBURGH REVIEW, when he broadly announces his admiration of those principles by which political revolutions are engendered.—"Of the times to which this *narrative* belongs," says the Edinburgh Reviewer, "*times* to which England owes all her *freedom* and all her *glory*, we can *never* hear *too much* or *too often*, &c." Now, it may be as well to recollect what were "the times" of which our northern politicians declare they "can never hear too much or too often;" and this reminiscence shall be furnished from the pages of their own work. It was during *these times* that "the great and *efficient population*, *by whose motion* or consent *all things are* ultimately *governed*," was decidedly uppermost; and this although they had then *a King*, whom even Mrs. Lucy Hutchinson herself, the wife of one of his rebel and regicide judges, describes to have been *temperate, chaste, and serious—so that the fools and bawds, mimics and catamites of the former court* (court of James the First) *grew out of fashion, and the nobility and courtiers, who did not quite abandon their debaucheries, had yet that reverence for the King* (Charles the First) *to retire into corners to practise them.* THESE WERE THE "TIMES" OF WHICH THE REVIEWERS OF EDINBURGH AFFIRM THEY "CAN NEVER HEAR TOO MUCH OR TOO OFTEN!"

Nor is this all. "He (Colonel Hutchinson, whose Memoirs, now first published from the M.S.S. of his Widow Lucy, the Reviewers are investigating) was appointed;" they observe, "a member of the High Court of Justice, for the *trial of the King*; and—*after long hesitation* and *frequent prayer* TO GOD *to direct him aright*, in an affair of so much moment—he deliberately concurred in the sentence which was *pronounced by it*." Mrs. Hutchinson, it is added, "*proudly disclaims* for him *the apology*, afterwards so familiar in the mouths of his associates, *of having been overawed* by Cromwell." Such are the attested facts advanced by the Edinburgh Reviewers; and yet it is of this at first-hesitating and praying rebel, who, according to the testimony of his own wife, took up arms against his "temperate and chaste and serious" lawful King,—it is, notwithstanding, of this righteous murderer of the same King, of this deliberate regicide, for whom also any apology is, in the face of the world, proudly disclaimed, it is of this man, *I* say—and let it be remarked and remembered—that

the *Edinburgh Review* ventures to *think* "*England should be* proud of having given birth to" him !! We are now called upon to glory in the times which brought a righteous Monarch to the scaffold, and raised his self-righteous Murderers into estimation and authority. I proceed to shew, that this revolutionary and king-killing system is clearly inculcated by the Reviewers of Edinburgh ; and that I have not, as might be well supposed, availed myself of one solitary offence on their part.

"It is *far from being virtuous*, therefore, or wise," say these Reviewers, pursuing their concerted plan of operations, in their account of *Leckie's Historical Survey of the Foreign Affairs of Great Britain*, "as many *unthinking persons* are too ready to *suppose*, to be perpetually on the watch *to curb the power of the people*, as perpetually *tending to become exorbitant*.

The *danger*, in most cases, is *all* on the *other side*." "If we examine," they then observe, referring to our Revolution of 1688, "the course of *affairs* since that period, we shall clearly discover that they *have proceeded in their usual course*; and, *notwithstanding the helps provided for the people*, &c. all the changes have been *in favour of* the arsitocracy. Our system of *taxation*, which is now so *enormous a machine*, decidedly, and, to a degree infinitely greater than is generally supposed, *favours the higher orders*, and *throws the mighty burden upon* the middling and *the lower*. The composition of *the Commons' House of Parliament*, has become, confessedly, *less dependent upon* the voice of *the people*. The *enormous revenue of the Government*, which is *chiefly* taken *from the pockets of the people*, is chiefly *returned into the pockets of the higher ranks*, by whom so great a proportion of the lucrative places are engrossed." Here the Edinburgh Reviewers pause, most ingeniously confessing, at the same time, that "they are running (to use their own exquisite metaphor, although it might puzzle some minds to conceive how any man can be said to be running from the desk, or table, at which he is continually writing !) too far from the Government of Sicily."

Truly, Gentlemen of Edinburgh ! you deviated far enough from the regular track of thought, when the vile Government of Sicily suggested to you the propriety of associating with it the still excellent Government of England !! System indeed, was to be supported by him ; and, therefore, this Northern Reviewer could not resist any opportunity for throwing out some hints and beckonings towards sedition, something for discontent "to mark and learn and inwardly digest !"

Never do these revewers, it must be confessed, lose sight of this their principal design.—Spain, the conduct of whose people has excited such sympathetic enthusiasm for all that is praiseworthy and admirable in civil community, is by these gentlemen commended only as likely to produce very different results from those which have hitherto been anticipated.—"We *anticipate*," say the Edinburgh Reviewers, in their (in some respects, able and inimitable) observations on the far-famed *Exposition by Don Pedro Cevallos*, "a most salutary *change in public opinion* from the example of Spain (I wish, by the way, that this "Example of Spain" may not, like the one formerly held out by her present invaders, come, in Arthur Young's style, to be considered as a "Warning to Britain !) should her efforts prove successful, from the part which this country so wisely and generously takes in her affairs. The *measures of our Government will be more freely canvassed; the voice of the country* will be no longer stifled, and, *when it raises it self*, it *must be heard*. *Reforms*, in the administration of our affairs, *must prevent more violent changes*; and some *radical improvements*, in our *constitution*, will *no longer* be *viewed with horror*," &c. These gentlemen see nothing but revolutions, and the volcanic "powers of popular enthusiasm."

Consistency seems to forsake them, however, when they come to expatiate on Spanish affairs. It is now that they find it difficult to reconcile—what is, in truth, irreconcilable !—their ill-dissembled admiration of the present *French Ruler*, and their doctrines respecting the *Rights of the People*. Here it is, notwithstanding, that the sagacity of these reviewers is perhaps most conspicuous. Let it be seen how they acquit themselves in this distressing dilemma.—"He," they assure us, speaking of Napoleon Bonaparte, "knows, as well as we do (exquisite modesty this, since our reviewers mean *themselves* here !) that the utmost success of his arms can" not "subdue the people of Spain into a nation of willing and peaceful slaves." Having, in common with the Edinburgh Review, made this notable discovery, *Bonaparte*, it is said, "*will* not only *offer them* (the aforesaid people of Spain) good terms, but will finally grant them *such a Capitulation* (witness that of Madrid) *as their gallant* resistance at once *deserves*, and renders it *absolutely necessary* for the conqueror *to allow*. He will rule Spain with a very light rod (Mem: the weight of the Little Emperor's little finger

being heavier than the ruling bodies of most monarchs !); *if he* ever *rules* her *at all*," &c. What facetious fellows are these Caledonian Politicians ! " That *Bonaparte will ultimately succeed*," say they, " *is highly probable*;" though they stipulate a doubt, in the same instant of time, " *if he ever rules*" Spain " *at all*." And while they endeavour to assume *his success* against Spain as " highly probable," they nevertheless *commend* " *the part which this Country so wisely* and generously *takes* in her affairs." If, however, Bonaparte is to succeed in compelling the Spaniards to submit to his yoke, it might perplex men as clever as the writers of the Edinburgh Review—to explain the *wisdom*, whatever may be the *generosity*, of England's interference on her behalf !! Those writers are too partial to logic not to excuse my reasoning a little on this interesting subject. It would, as was just remarked, be difficult to defend the wisdom of any measure of which the effect must necessarily prove disastrous.

I do not imagine it necessary to notice the remarks of the Edinburgh Review on the American Revolution. These are conveyed in the review of the two late Lives of Washington, by Judge Marshall and David Ramsay; and are completely at variance with the statements of Dean Tucker, and the experience of William Cobbett.

Catholic Emancipation, as it is strangely called, demands some consideration.—" We do not understand *what is meant* in this country," prefaces the Edinburgh Review, in its criticism on *Parnell's History of the Penal Laws against the Irish Catholics*, " by the notion *that a measure of consummate wisdom* (i.e. *Catholic Emancipation*) and imperious necessity, *is to be deferred* for any time, or to depend upon any contingency. — — — To lye by in timid and indolent silence—to suppose an *inflexibility* in which no *court* ever could, under *pressing circumstances*, persevere—and to neglect a regular and vigorous appeal to *public opinion*, is to give up all chance of doing good, and to abandon *the only instrument* by which the *few* are ever *prevented from ruining* the *many*.— —We are by no means convinced that the *decorous silence*, recommended upon the *Catholic Question*, would be rewarded by those *future concessions* of which many persons appear to be so certain. We have a strange *incredulity* where *persecution* is to be *abolished*, and any class of men *restored* to their *indisputable rights*. When we see it done, we will believe it. Till it is done, we *shall always consider it to be highly improbable*;—much too improbable *to justify the smallest relaxation in the Catholics* themselves, *or in* those who are *well-wishers* to their cause. — — — With the conviction of recent and domestic history, that mankind are not to be lashed and chained out of their faith,—we are *striving to* teaze and *worry them into a better theology*," &c. Let any unprejudiced understanding consider the foregoing passages, and then honestly decide,—whether the Edinburgh Reviewers are friends to " *decorous silence*" and *respect* " the humanity of *our Sovereign*," or whether they are not, on the contrary, rather " *well-wishers*" to the *Catholics*?

Since these reviewers are thus confessedly propitious to the enemies of protestantism, it is no marvel that, as in their remarks on *Mr. Perceval's proposed Bill for improving the Situation of Stipendiary Curates*, they should openly oppugn the Discipline of the Church of England.—" *The power*," they observe, in this article, " which the *bishops* at present possess over their clergy *is so enormous* that none but a fool or a madman would think of compromising his future happiness by giving the most remote cause of offence to his diocesan.— — — Since we have enjoyed, practically, a free constitution; the *bishops have*, in point of fact, possessed *little or no power* over their clergy." Is not this *contradiction* indeed? We are first entreated to take alarm at the " enormous power of the bishops," and then directly assured of their " possessing little or no power ! !" There is really no comprehending these critical enigmas! To me, however, it is tolerably presumptive, that the writer of the above quoted remarks (though he, being neither " a fool or a madman," would not even " think of compromising his future happiness by giving the most remote cause of offence to his diocesan,") is sufficiently galled by some of those *powers* which " *constituted authorities*" have " *so improvidently conferred on*" *the prelacy*. " As *the power of enforcing residence*," says this reviewing author, " must be lodged somewhere, why not give the *bishop* a council, consisting of two-thirds ecclesiastics and one-third *laymen*; and meeting at the same time as the sessions and deputy-sessions—the bishops' *licence* for *non-residence* to issue, of course, upon *their* recommendation? Considering the vexatious *bustle of a new*, and the *laxity of an aged bishop*, we cannot but think that a diocese would be much more steadily administered under this system, &c.— — — Residence is a very proper and necessary measure; but it requires a great deal of moderation and temper to carry it into effect, with-

out doing more mischief than good. *Every lay plunderer*, and *every fanatical coxcomb*, is forging *fresh chains* for the *English Clergy*; and we should not be surprised, in a very little time, *to see them absenting themselves from their benefices by a kind of day-rule*, like prisoners in the King's Bench." What fulminations are here vented against clerical residence! Really they appear to be no other than the angry ebullitions of some favorite "*popular preacher*;" who has, between "the laxity of an aged and *the bustle of a new*" *diocesan*, been recently *called into residence*, too remote from the scene of his former celebrity, and this, of course, by *a bishop* who "*dislikes* the *principles* and *fears* the *genius*" of this deserving clergyman! Truly, "*residence is* a most *proper and necessary measure*;" and we must be careful, on this account, not to let our "*moderation* supersede our *religion*. When, therefore, the Edinburgh Review asks, *why not lodge the enforcing of residence in a species of mongrel council*, the question, or rather position, solicits our very serious consideration. The reviewer demands, why not? I ask, on the other hand, why?—What, indeed, have "*laymen*" to do with the *spiritual* regulations of the *church* itself? Let us persist in retaining, as far as practicable, the ecclesiastical discipline to which we have been so long accustomed!

To talk about "chains" and "day-rules," as even metaphorically illustrative of clerical residence, is something worse than idle prattle. Where duty enforces our attendance, no feeling of constraint ought to be suffered to mingle with the sentiment of becoming submission. It is in the power of every man, if he chooses, to vacate the situation to which he knows himself incompetent. Sacred subterfuge is surely the worst of subterfuge.

I have now, let me hope, fairly substantiated the charges which, in the commencement of this *Arbitrator*, it seemed expedient to prefer against the EDINBURGH REVIEW generally;—I mean, chiefly as to *Parliamentary Reformation* and *Catholic Emancipation*.—Equally discoverable is it, that these reviewers are the pioneers of the *Grenville Coalition*. Their mode of proceeding, indeed, may not always be directly obvious; but they will easily be understood when they are allusively describing those whose "councils are called factious—because opposed to the wishes of the court," and who may, "when misfortune shall have silenced both sycophancy and prejudice, come to be acknowledged as the oracles of wisdom."

Neither time or space allow me to enter minutely into the literary qualities of this number of the present Review. It must suffice to hint, that its composition betrays fewer defects than were instanced on a former occasion; that, though the critique on Walter Scott's Works of Dryden is equitable enough, too much praise is lavished on his own poetry; and that Sir Richard Phillips, by having publicly divulged the detestation in which he holds all *anonymous critical scurrility*, appears to have propitiated the favour of our Edinburgh Reviewers.

December 21, 1808. *JUSTUS.*

NOVELTIES OF LITERATURE.

SHORT DIRECTIONS FOR SERVANTS.

1. *Do every thing in its proper time;*
2. *Keep every thing to its proper use;*
3. *Put every thing in its proper place.*

WONDERS OF SATIRE! Marvellous have been the feats of "*The Satirist*" for the last year.—"The libeller, *Charles Sedley*," saith the virtuous editor of that *Monthly Meteor*, "has been completely silenced; *Cobbett* is, we "know, writhing with the torture of our lash; "and the vile *Hague* will no longer be able "to commit his accustomed depredations."!!! Preface to the third volume of The Satirist, or Monthly Meteor.

"Brag," says one of our proverbs, "is a "good dog, but Hold-fast is a better."—This proud vaunt of our 'Satirist' calls to mind the following lines in Pope's Epilogue to the Satires.

Down, down, proud Satire! though a realm be spoil'd,
Arraign no mightier thief than wretched Wild;
Or, if a court or country's made a job,
Go, drench a pick-pocket, and join the mob!

MRS. HANWAY.

When scarcely any department of literature possesses so great a share of the public attention as *novels*, we cannot but feel considerable interest in whatever relates to a species of writing which tends so much to influence our national manners. *Novels and Dramatic Pieces* have been esteemed the most indubitable characteristics of the popular taste: if such estimation is just, how vile, how insipid, how profligate, must that people be who can encourage multiplied editions of the most infamous scandal?—Who can read with avidity the nauseous tales of libertine females? And who support an avowed *Satirist* in the wit of punning, the critiques of misrepresentation, and the mock raillery of real ribaldry and licentiousness?—Amid such alarming features of the depravity of the public taste, we hail the publication of Mrs. Hanway's long-expected work with something more than pleasure—with that reviving hope which our regard for the purity of our national literature and the former works of that lady together inspire. Above the necessities of those who stoop to make seductive tales, their means of livelihood, possessing extensive connexions in society, gifted with genuine wit, and armed with the shafts of open and generous satire, she comes forth to interest and to reprove; to shew women how to dip their pens in ink, without forgetting the decorum and debasing the dignity of their sex; and to make it manifest, that, even in this abject state of the public mind, *novels* may be written without puns and puerilities, without defamation and libertinism, and yet possess all the glow of sentiment and interest which can influence the head or fascinate the heart.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE.

How shall I speak thee, or thy power address,
Thou god of our idolatry, THE PRESS?
— — — — — — — — — —
Thou fountain, at which drink the good and wise!
Thou ever-bubbling spring of endless lies!
Like Eden's dread probationary tree,
Knowledge of good and evil is—from thee.—*Cowper.*

GREENWICH, A POEM, DESCRIPTIVE AND HISTORICAL.

BY JAMES SANSOM.

DESCRIPTIVE poetry is said to have been entirely neglected by the ancients; but this assertion is not true. The beauties of nature must have been among the first of those objects that could awaken the mind to contemplation; and, therefore, among the first subjects of modulated expression. Particular description might, indeed, have been neglected, for those general and more prominent appearances which are every where known, and which every where strike the human mind with admiration. The inimitable pieces of landscape occasionally introduced by Homer and Virgil, though short, and confined to a few strong features, are sufficient to shew us what those authors could have described without having seen that perfection of landscape painting which *some modern critics* have considered as the prototype of descriptive poetry. Many pictures might also be selected from Theocritus, of exquisite delineation and colouring; but, since these are too general to be admitted as examples of that species of poetry which is now become common, and which may be defined to be "local views in verse," I shall content myself with an instance from the *Sylvæ* of *Statius*. We find, there, in his *Surrentinum Polli*, a correct and elegant description of a magnificent villa situated on the rocky coast of Campania. That which painters call *the picturesque*, is drawn in rich and animated colours, and endued with those living sentiments which ever distinguish the

powers of poetry, with unrivalled superiority, over the art of the painter. The following passage may be cited as a very high finished *morceau* from the pencil of the muse:—

" *hæc domos ortus*
" *Aspicit, et Phœbi tenerum jubar; illa caden-*
" *tem*
" *Detinet, exactamque negat dimittere lucem,*
" *Cum jam fessa dies, et in æquora montis opaci*
" *Umbra cadit, vitreoque natant prætoria*
" *ponto.*"

Nor is the figurative embellishment contained in another part, where the poet is describing the vineyards near the sea-shore, to be omitted; although, in modern poetry, it would be considered as a trait of affectation by those fastidious critics who know not how to draw the line between the brilliant images which are the real offspring of imagination contemplating Nature with fervency, and those obscure abortions that are generated in feeble minds by the perusal of other poems. The reader who has ever thrown the reins on his fancy, while he has indulged in the contemplation of natural objects, will not turn from these lines with dissatisfaction:—

" *Sæpe per Autumnum jam pubescente Lyæo*
" *Concendit scopulos, noctisque occulta sub*
" *umbra*
" *Palmite maturo rorantia lumina tersit*
" *Nereis; et dulces rapuit de collibus uvas:*
" *Sæpe et vicino spursa est Vindemia fluctu:*
" *Et Satyri cecidere vadis, mundamque per*
" *undas*
" *Dorida montani cupiè runt prendere Panes.*"

We have been the rather induced to mention this poem of Statius's, because Johnson himself has ascribed the whole honour of the invention of a descriptive poem to Denham; and the want of a classical origin for this department of the muse (although in itself of no moment) has given those pedants who pretend to strike at all modern innovations, an opportunity to intimidate the efforts of genius. It would be futile for them to tell us, that the world does not want any imitators of Statius: the world wants, and ever will want, genuine imitators of Nature; and Statius is authority good enough to stop the mouth of any pedant with respect to the mode of imitation.

But, whatever classical authority may be necessary for descriptive poetry in general, they must be bigots, indeed, who should suggest that the poem now before us has any need of it; and, although Mr. Sansom might lay claim to the examples of Ennius or Lucan for writing history in verse, yet his claims to originality would certainly be more admissible, as well as more honourable. Numerous as are the writers on topography, and voluminous as are the works compounded of the fragments of these writers, it never seems to have entered into the head of any one before Mr. Sansom, to try how a topographical selection would read in metre. If Johnson has praised Denham for striking out a new path for genius, Mr. Sansom certainly deserves superior praise; for, he has not only struck out a path much wider than that of Denham's, but one of so gentle an ascent, that genius will be perfectly unnecessary for the crowds who may rush into it. By the aid of Lyson's Environs, and a Rhyming Dictionary, men, women, or children, may speedily become the poets of their village; and, whatever wonders may happen to surround them, they may, like Mr. Sansom, take up their pens,

" And grace those wonders in immortal verse!"
Greenwich, page 1.

A poem written upon such a plan has great claims to the gratitude of the place it celebrates, since, by those jaunting *sparks of literature*, who, travelling through the different counties, throw their "*fog-exhaling*" beams over all the *Beauties of England and Wales*, it will be sure to be quoted. But Mr. Sansom's *composition* possesses yet another well-founded hope of descending to posterity; for, since much of it seems well adapted for the recitation of the *college man*, who explains the wonders of Greenwich College to the curious stranger, we may venture to predict, that neither the present officiating veteran, nor any of his successors, as long as those wonders endure, will fail to learn, by rote, the lines of Mr. Sansom;

" And grace those wonders with immortal
" verse!"

Mr. Sansom has the authority of one of his subscribers and patrons, namely, that of the *Right Hon. R. B. Sheridan, M. P.* for addressing his work to his wife. We do not, however, recollect that the facetious *transmuter* of Pizarro complimented his lady with the title of a *perfect wife*; and we are sorry that Mr. Sansom has made use of the term, because, in the unsettled understandings of those who are uninitiated in the mysterious happiness of matrimony, the term *perfect wife* may be thought synonymous with that of *very wife* in Pope's Wife of Bath:—

" A very woman, and a *very wife*."

This would be a pity, as Mrs. Sansom seems, by the rest of his account, to be a neat, quiet, body; and a much more proper muse for his poem, than any one of the nine sluts of Helicon, with whom we do not perceive that he has ever had *any doings*.

Having got over his introduction, Mr. Sansom leads us into Greenwich park; and here, we suppose, his *domestic muse* is safe at home, and out of sight; for he bursts forth with—

" O, scenes of bliss, and form'd for love and
" joy,
" Here sports *in every tree* Love's wanton
" boy," &c.

And, soon after, introduces us to a buxom nursery-maid, of whom he tells us, that she

" walks, 'not unseen,'
" With lively hope, she trips the vernal green,
" Warm from romance, or novel, *eyes each tree*,
" By gypsies promis'd 'squires of high degree;'
" And, led by fond illusion, *spreads her charms*,
" And hopes a conquest worthy of *her arms!*"

Now, whether she *eyes the tree* because she might, perhaps, be acquainted with the tale of January and May; or because Mr. Sansom, in the absence of his conjugal muse wanted that copulative member of modern versification, called a rhyme, is not easy to determine. It may, however, be surmised, that Mr. Sansom did not suffer her *to spread her charms* for nothing.

But Mr. Sansom does not often offend thus against the virtuous influence of his "*fitting*" muse, as he calls her energies in his second page. With a steady unruffled tenor, he satisfies our curiosity concerning Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's, and other objects in sight, from Flamstead hill; and, pointing out what was Pelham-House, but is now the Naval Asylum, he fixes upon a spot for a naval column, and draws such a plan and design for this elevation, as renders the *Tropæa Octaviani*, which Virgil has ventured to imagine at the commencement of the third Georgic, a mere *gewgaw*, worthy the attention of those only whose taste has been depraved by classical studies. At the sight of this column, we cannot but agree with him that—

" Each veteran's heart would swell with trans-
" port *new*,
" And *sweet* reflection *kindle* at the view,
" To see their brave commanders nobly rise,
" While tears of rapture burst from British
" eyes."

The reader may, perhaps, not at first clearly apprehend the *kindling of sweets*: it is a new metaphor, taken from the burning of sugar over candied confectionaries. Besides, it testifies the honesty of the author, by the hint it gives of the place whence he derives this idea of his naval column. We recollect to have seen a model exactly as he describes it upon a twelfth-cake, in a patriotic pastry-cook's window.—Indeed, no author ever abounded in more appropriate imagery, than Mr. S: thus, when about to describe the mournful braying of asses, under the cruelty of their drivers, he says:—

" Which here the muse, expressive of her pain,
" Would fain describe, *in loud resounding*
" *strain*,
" With hunger, and from cruelty *they moan*,
" In dismal echoes, to each other's *groan*,
" The blows upon their poor scarce-cover'd
" *bones*,
" Might pierce a heart, though hard as *flint* or
" *stones*." *Page* 27.

The affecting *bathos* of this last line, the continued *moaning* rhyme through the four terminations, and the *loud-resounding* bray with which the muse is *straining*, to condole with the long-eared sufferers, must certainly be admired by all who retain any taste for genuine Cibberian poetry.

The second part begins with an invocation to genius, which Mr. Sansom calls an *unseen power*: and, truly, we shall henceforth believe, that this same power must be *deaf* as well as *invisible*, by the little attention it has paid to the poet's prayer. Two such lines as the following were surely sufficient to make genius *come down*, were it ever so much in its altitudes:

" O, unseen Power, that, on sublimest wing,
" Can teach the untaught soul *with fire to*
" *sing*."

But it seems that genius chooses to keep on *sublimest* wing, and leave *fire to sing by itself*. We, therefore, find this same *fire*, as it generally does without genius, merely giving *birth to light*, *firing* remotest ages, and having assisted *rural scenes* to set fire *to virtue*, finishes the paragraph, rhymes with *inspired*, and goes out as it ought to do. Indeed, we were under some apprehensions that it was going to *set fire to the Thames*: which, through all its course from Gloucestershire,

" Till in great Neptune's arms its winding
" ends

occupies the remainder of this book, canto, or part.

The third part begins without an invocation and fixes our attention upon Greenwich Hospital. We are here struck with a species of poetical embellishment, which we do not recollect to have met with before, but the cultivation of which we strenuously recommend to Mr. Theodore Hook, the Hon. Mr. Skeffington, &c. We think it may justly take the name of a metaphorical pun, and might have been used to great advantage in the *Siege of St. Quintin*, if the original French would have admitted of its construction.

Read, ye men of words, and admire!—

" The noblest structures pointed out by Fame
" In ancient times, which fairest plaudits claim,
" Must sink before the glory of that pile
" Beneath *whose sheltering wings* our veterans smile!"

O! happy language of Britain, in which both *geese* and *buildings* are said to have *wings*.—Indeed there is some probability that a tripple pun is here intended, together with a side-wind compliment to Lord Hood, since College men of all sorts are jocosely known by the nick-name of *Old Geese*; but this we refer to the opinion of that prince of punsters, Mr. Thomas Dibdin. The seven wonders of the world follow next, in as regular order as we recollect to have seen them under a wood-cut in an old spelling-book: but, alas, these admirable pieces of our youthful astonishment, follow only to

" Vanish all—before Placentia's spires."

For great as we are accustomed to regard our old acquaintances, we are now *poetically* told

" But this superior, the wide Earth must own,
" Since Heavenly Charity a monarch fir'd,
" To raise a pile by Virtue's self admir'd."

Where we again perceive that nothing in this sort of poetry can be done without *fire*; for here we find it put even into the hand of charity (probably in the form of red-hot iron) that she may compel a monarch to build an hospital. Then follows the history of all the Kings, Queens, &c. who were born, lived, or died in the palace of Placentia. We cannot resist the pleasure of quoting the following fine Bathetical passages from the description of the destruction of the Spanish Armada.

" Instant from British valour, *thunders* broke
" T'involve the hostile fleet in fire and smoke."

This is the very depth of the sublime: and the next line exhibits a gradually sinking climax, that has never been equalled.

" The roar of cannon, tumults, shouts, and cries,"

Then comes some real thunder, and in the first line

" Explosions dreadful rend the vaulted air."

Which would be dreadful indeed to the ears of most of Mr. S.'s admirers, were the idea not softened and let down by a gentle bathos in the second.

" And *loudly* Heaven's awakened wrath declare."

And at last

" *The Spanish ships, blown up or tempest tost,*
" Scattered in wild confusion, lasting fright,
" Rais'd Albion's glory in th' immortal fight!"

A wonderful feat for destroyed vessels to perform! and by which insinuation the author pourtrays a modest method of celebrating British commanders, by bestowing their praises on their defeated foes.

This splendid account of Greenwich Hospital is followed by the Duchess of Brunswick, her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales, and the charitable ladies of Greenwich: of the latter we are glad to hear of the abundance

" Who numerous here demand the poet's lyre,
" To sing their virtue *with exalted fire*;"

for without *fire* it seems this poet never sings; and, therefore, as these charitable ladies probably do not furnish him with *coal** enough, he determines that

——" this fair praise shall in each tender breast,
" With conscious dignity in silence rest."

It would be an endless task to point out all the elegancies in the *diction* and versification of this poem, which none but the most desperate dunces will venture to imitate. We confess that we have our fears lest some infatuated bellman, at Christmas, may attempt some plagiarisms upon Mr. Sansom, and even assert a prior claim to some of his best lines. But what bellman ever ventured to introduce so fine a *cacophonia* of rhyme as this,

" Whether the park invite, still beauteous seen,
" Or Thames, majestic, wind around the scene;"

* Allow us this colloquial pun, ye punning editors of the Satirist: we plead guilty indeed of having stolen it from some of the farcical melo-dramas of your best friends and contributors.

or broke a long hard-mouth'd word into the pace of his verse with such dexterity as this?

"Where learning, taste, and *hospital'ty* meet."

Can novelty of expression, like the following, in so familiar and yet so ambiguous, a style be met with any where else?

"These gallant vet'rans *bate no jot of soul.*"

But enough:—we have already exceeded the limits to which we usually confine our articles of criticism. Indeed when the merits of the work before us are duly weighed, and when we assure our readers that the most learned man in Greenwich is said to have stretched forth his hand through the *clouds* of Greek that environ him, and assisted in the composition, we shall certainly be excused: particularly since, by trespassing upon their patience here, we may have saved both their patience and their pence in other respects.

SOUTHEY'S CHRONICLE OF THE CID.

RODRIGO Diaz De Bivar*, the *Campeador*, or *Campaigner*, is by no means to be confounded with the every-day-heroes even of the earlier ages. His very first exploit was evidential of his subsequent greatness.—His father, then "stricken in years," being insulted by Don Gomez (Lord of Gomez, and, while mighty in martial prowess, of considerable importance in the Cortes), Rodrigo, having first obtained the paternal blessing, proceeded forthwith against the Count, determined to revenge the insult given to his father. He accordingly defied him, fought him; and, cutting off his head, brought it bleeding, at his horse's neck, as a filial offering to his aged parent! Terrible as this narrative may appear to the imaginations of some of our readers, there seems no good reason, considering the customs of the times to which it refers, to question its authenticity. The following adventure is so much in the style of spiritual quixotism, and so inseparable from the hero of the piece, that we shall not hesitate to transcribe it entire, especially as it also exhibits all the characteristics of the language in which Mr. Southey has judged himself called upon to tell the story of the Cid. Deeming it proper to undergo the penance of pilgrimage before he tried, as proposed by the King of Arragon to the King of Castille, a pitched combat for the City of Calahorra,

"Rodrigo," continues Mr. Southey, "forthwith set out upon the road, and took with him twenty knights; and, as he went, he did great good, and gave alms, feeding the poor and needy. And upon the way they found a leper, struggling in a quagmire, who called out to them, with a loud voice, to help him for the love of God! and when Rodrigo heard this, he alighted from his beast and helped him, and placed him upon the beast before him, and carried him with him, in this manner, to the inn where he took up his lodging [on, or for, or during,] that night. At this were his knights a little pleased. And when supper was ready, he bade his knights take their seats; and he took the leper, by the hand, and seated him next himself, and ate with him out of the same dish. The knights were greatly offended at this foul sight; insomuch, that they rose up and left the chamber.— — — When it was midnight, and Rodrigo was fast asleep, the leper breathed upon him, between his shoulders; and that breath was so strong that it passed through him, even through his breast: and he awoke, being astounded, and felt for the leper by him, and found him not; and he began to call him, but there was no reply. Then he arose in fear, and called for a light, and it was brought him; and he looked for the leper, and could see nothing; so he returned into the bed, leaving the light burning. And he began to think within himself what had happened, and of that breath which had passed through him, and how the leper was not there. After a while, as he was thus musing, there appeared before him one in white garments, who said unto him 'Sleepest thou, or wakest thou, Rodrigo?' and he answered, and said 'I do not sleep; but who art thou, that bringest with thee such brightness and so sweet an odour?' Then said he, 'I am Saint Lazarus; and, know that, I was the leper to whom thou didst so much good, and so great honour for the love of God: and, because thou didst this for his sake, hath God now granted thee a great gift—for whensoever that breath, which thou hast felt, shall

* He was (says Mr. S.) lord of the town of that name, now a small place, about two leagues north of Burgos.

come upon thee, whatever thing thou desirest to do, and shalt then begin, that shalt thou accomplish to thy heart's desire, whether it be in battle or aught else, so that thy honor shall go on increasing from day to day; and thou shalt be feared both by Moors and Christians, and thy enemies shall never prevail against thee, and thou shalt die an honourable death in thine own house, and in thy renown †, for God hath blessed thee; and therefore go thou on, and evermore persevere in doing good. And with that he disappeared," &c.

Rodrigo Diaz De Bivar, we are assured, actually confided in the vision; and, in that confidence, obtained signal victory over his enemies. The whole relation is sufficiently marvellous; and yet, perhaps, the circumstance of his kindness towards the leper forms by no means the least credible part of it. Compassion for the diseased and destitute was, we know, formerly extended to cases which it would now appear romantic to instance. During the reign of monachism, even in our own island, kings and queens conceived themselves piously humbled by the act of washing and cleansing the feet of the poor! The distribution of little silver pieces, at Whitehall, annually on Maundy Thursday, is now the only vestige of this voluntary humiliation of royalty. Such, then, was the Cid's devotion to Saint Lazarus, that he apportioned certain houses in Valencia, conformably with the practice of those times, to form a hospital under his protection; and establish therein a brotherhood of knights, to attend on lepers! That the Cid, at any rate, was no imaginary being, is pretty clear, from the circumstance recorded by Berganza. The Cid's houses were, in the days of this writer, shewn at Burgos; and "the Monastery of Cardena," adds Mr. Southey, "to which he had given them, granted them to the city upon a low rent, and on condition that the *Arms of Rodrigo* should always be preserved over its gateway, in token of respect to him who was so great an honor to the city." &c.

Rodrigo was chiefly indebted to the ambition dissatisfaction of Don Sancho, who from the first protested against his royal father's division of the kingdom severally to his brothers, for the occasions by which he grew into greatness. Rodrigo, indeed, was the David of the Castillians; but it was his happy fate not to meet, either in King don Ferando or King don Sancho, with—a Saul. As therefore his career was glorious, so was his death distinguished. He who had been patronized through life by Saint Lazarus, was kindly warned of his dissolution by Saint Peter, when, having convened the nobility, he addressed to them his farewell oration, directing them, as he knew his end was fast approaching, prudently to conceal his death from the enemy; and still to avail themselves of his reputation, by fixing his body, after embalming it, upon a horse, and leading it into battle. His directions were punctually obeyed: and his body was not interred till ten years after his decease.

Mr. Southey's 'Chronicle of the Cid' will reward the attention of those who delight to explore the transactions of chivalrous centuries. It is full of simplicity, and sensibility; and as amusing, as it is interesting. Without stopping to discuss the exact merits of the translation, or enquiring whether Mr. Southey has done well in imitating the vulgar version of our most sacred books, we certainly think that, on the whole, his labours are entitled to approbation and patronage. We wish, finally, that the modern advocates for the Roman Catholic Religion would bestow on this volume their very serious and unprejudiced consideration! Mr. Southey, it should be stated, is only an Historical Catholic. His superstition extends no farther than to legandary narratives—he has nothing to do with confessions and creeds.

* And thus, according to this 'Chronicle,' the Cid departed.

CRITICAL OPINIONS.

Committed once into the public arms,
The baby seems to smile with added charms!
He views it with complacency supreme,
Solicits kind attention to his dream;
And, daily more enamour'd of the cheat,
Asks but of heaven to bless the dear deceit.—*Cowper.*

The Convention Laid at the Right Door, &c. &c.

NOTWITHSTANDING all the explanations to which the Convention of Cintra has given rise, it seems very uncertain whether it will ever be "laid at the right door." It has too many fathers, we think, to be taken in by any one singly.—

Generals who will not conquer when they may,
Firm friends to treaty, pleasure, and good pay! *Cowper.*

Memoirs of the Rev. John Newton, &c. &c. By Richard Cecil, A. M. Minister of St. John's Chapel, Bedford Row.

Of the once intimate friend, and almost confessor, of the poet Cowper, something more satisfactory than the present Memoirs might well have been anticipated. Long since, indeed, the late Rector of St. Mary Woolnoth himself published an account of by far the most generally interesting portion of his own life,—of his juvenile malpractices, his youthful loves, his wonderful escapes, and his subsequent conversion and ordination to the ministry. Mr. Cecil's biography adds very little to the stock of our previous information respecting the subject of it; and it is entitled to no serious commendation as a literary performance. The Rev. John Newton, we believe, outlived himself. He was born in London, July 24, 1725: he died on the 21st of December 1807, at the advanced age of 82 years. He had held his *last* preferment nearly thirty years; but was *first* introduced to the church in 1764. If the beginning of his career was sufficiently unpromising, his latter years, passed in tranquillity and happiness, seem to have atoned to him for his early adversities. His *own* relation of such events may certainly be perused with advantage by those whose passions are not yet fairly subdued by experience.

A Letter to the Bishop of London on the Immoral and Disgraceful Scenes, exhibited in the Public Streets, by crowds of half-naked and unfortunate Prostitutes; with a Postcript, addressed to the Magistrates, &c.

What the respectable Diocesan of our Metropolis has to do with "half-naked Prostitutes," it is not easy immediately to discover. It is something wiser, as well as more proper, to "address the Magistrates," however, on the topics suggested in this Letter. If the writer's object is to be collected from his language, he appears to propose the banishment of all prostitutes from the common intercourse of society—"the *objects* of allurement may be *driven out of* public *view*;" and then it seems they are to be "*constrained to live* more in society *with each other*." These unfortunate females, not being sufficiently abandoned already, are, by compulsorallily herding together, to be rendered completely desperate! While "the profligate youth" is thus deprived of the liberty "to make his base assignation at the corner of any street," he is necessarily to be urged, by this newly projected reform, into the inmost recesses of profligacy, into the very slaughter-houses of prostitution!—"Yea," saith our reformer; because "the gate of the chief-magistrate, and the doors of our churches, are not exempt from these shameful scenes!" While things continue in their present state, this worthy gentleman, we think, will do well to *shut his eyes* whenever he is in danger of meeting (and this is the case "from Limehouse to Marylebone,") crowds of *half-naked* prostituted *females*. He is outrageously good!

Clara d'Albe; by Madame Cottin.

Monsieur d'Albe is a most respectable man, of sixty years of age; while Clara, who becomes his wife, is exactly twenty-two. They contrive to produce two children. Clara, however, eventually falls in love with one Frederick, a young lad who is under the fostering protection of her husband. The consequences of this amorous rencontre may be imagined. Chaucer's marriage of January and May, with some sentimental interpolations, would nearly resemble the union of M. d'Albe with Clara.

We cannot recommend 'Clara d'Albe' to the perusal of any young lady, who happens to have entered into the bands of wedlock with an elderly gentleman. We recommend it, notwithstanding, to all old boys desirous of coupling with young lasses—to all lasses deliberating on the eligibility of uniting themselves with elderly husbands—and, finally, to all young brides who may be dissatisfied with youthful bridegrooms.

An Essay on Light Reading, &c. by the Rev. Edward Mangin, M. A.

It is not "light reading for leisure hours," but "*the ordinary contents of a circulating-library*," and "those flesh-flies of the land" by whom its contents are generated, that Mr. Mangin holds up to public reprobation.—While we consider his opinions as sometimes *sweepingly severe*, we confess, at the same time, that there is but too much justice in his general animadversions on the "contents of circulating-libraries!" The following information, respecting the 'Deserted Village' of Goldsmith, seems worth transcribing. It is now first communicated by Dr. Strean [of Athlone, in Ireland], formerly curate of *Lissoy*, in the county of Westmeath; and one of the successors there to the brother of the poet (*Henry*), who is represented, in the '*Deserted Village*,' as "*passing rich with forty pounds a year!*" Lissoy, it now appears, is the real place where the scene of Goldsmith's poem is laid.

The Poem of the 'Deserted Village' took its origin from the circumstance of General Robert Napper (the grandfather of the gentleman who now lives in the house, within half a mile of Lissoy, and built by the General) having purchased an extensive tract of the country surrounding Lissoy, or Auburn; in consequence of which many families, here called *cottiers*, were removed, to make room for the intended improvements of what was now to become the wide domain of a rich man warm with the idea of changing the ideal face of his new acquisition; and were forced, '*with fainting steps*,' to go in search of '*torrid tracts*,' and '*distant climes*.'

This fact alone might be sufficient to establish the seat of the poem; but there cannot remain a doubt in any unprejudiced mind when the following are added; viz. that the character of the village-preacher, the above-named Henry, is copied from nature. He is described exactly as he lived; and his 'modest mansion' as it existed. Burn, the name of the village-master, and the site of his school-house; and Catherine Giragty, a lonely widow,

The wretched matron, forc'd in age for bread
To strip the brook with mantling cresses spread;

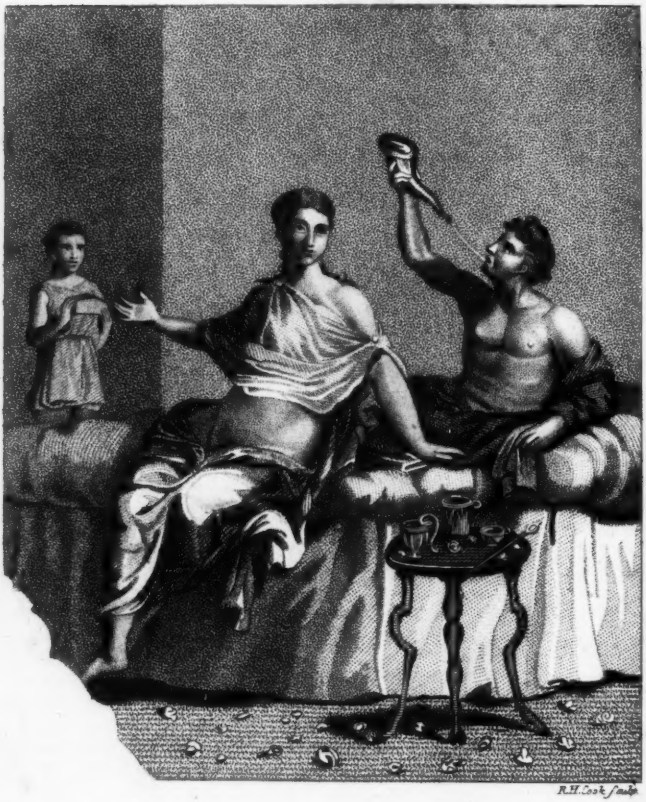
(and to this day the brook and ditches near the spot where her cabin stood abound with cresses) still remain in the memory of the inhabitants, and Catherine's children live in the neighbourhood. The pool, the busy mill, the house where '*nut-brown draughts inspired*,' are still visited as the poetic scene; and the '*hawthorn-bush*,' growing in an open space in front of the house, which I knew to have three trunks, is now reduced to one; the other two having been cut, from time to time, by persons carrying pieces of it away to be made into toys, &c. in honour of the bard, and of the celebrity of his poem. All these contribute to the same proof; and the '*decent church*,' which I attended for upwards of eighteen years, and which '*tops the neighbouring hill*,' is exactly described as seen from Lissoy, the residence of the preacher.

An Address, &c. upon the Baptism of Mr. Isaac Littleton, on his Profession of Christianity, &c. By John Evans, A. M.

Mr. Evans, whose literary productions are well known, now gives an account of the recent Conversion and Baptism of an English Jew; who was brought to embrace Christianity by accidentally reading one of Mr. Evans's published sermons, preached on the 23d of last May at Cranbrook, in Kent, and entitled *The propriety of the time of Christ's Appearance in the World*. Wonders, therefore, have not wholly ceased from among us. It is not the least marvellous part of this transaction, that Mr. Littleton will, by many very pious Christians, be still considered as a Jew! He observed to Mr. Evans, at the time of his conversion, "that the Sermon he had perused, having nothing in it inconsistent with the *Divine Unity*, had settled his mind; and *therefore* he wished the author to baptise *him* in the "*Christian Faith*," &c. So that, after all, *Mr. Littleton* has embraced CHRISTIANITY—because he *does not believe* in the DIVINITY OF JESUS CHRIST!!

Fashionable Biography, &c. &c. &c. By a Connoisseur.

If this facetious biographer is not speedily arrested in his career, if he is not either hushed or intimidated, if bounds are not set



R.H. Cook f. & p.

The Roman Costume and manner of the Breakfast Table.

London Published by & for Bell & De Camp, 11, Catherine St. Strand, Jan. 2 1809.

to his intrusion, it will really be impossible, during the ensuing season, to parade Bond-street with any comfort! Here are royal creatures of all sorts, tailors and stay-makers, milliners and boot-makers, upholsterers and dress-ladies, successively produced, by this gallanty-show-man, for the most exquisite entertainment of his customers. But why are the gentlemen of the black-cloth, however eccentric, made to figure in this exhibition? So it is, however; and, from the "extatic Mrs. F***e" to the "serio-comic S****y S****, no species of fashionable notoriety is left undelineated!—

"Land we the gods!"

Natural Theology, &c. &c. &c. By William Miller, M. A.

We are not very partial to the multiplication of books of this description.

Natural Theology may be well enough, but we still deem *Christian Theology* to be infinitely better,

FINE ARTS.

HERCULANEUM AND POMPEII.

EVER since the downfall of the Roman Empire, the contemplation of the progress of this extraordinary people (from their first appearance as a rude and savage banditti, until they became the conquerors of the world, stimulated to heroic deeds by national honour, and polished by the refinements of Greece, and the other countries which they had overcome), has been a source of pleasure not only to the learned, but to those whose taste or curiosity prompted them to the research. We look back with reverential wonder, as we advert to the patriotic wisdom which regulated their councils; to the almost universal success which accompanied their warlike eagles, and to the individual acts of heroism which mark every age of their history; the impressions thus made in early life grow with our growth; the obscurity of past ages softens down the whole into one harmonious tint, and we feel disposed to regard them not only as the wisest but the greatest of mankind. The desire for glory which so strongly marked their character, was not the love of individual fame, so much as to aggrandise the commonwealth; *Rome* with them was every thing, and all who were ambitious of the character of a Roman citizen adopted the manners of the capital; of course in the breast of the Roman, whether Patrician or Plebeian, whether an inhabitant of the Imperial City or of the most distant provinces, every idea, whether of war, of civil polity, or of domestic regulation, was still associated with Rome as a city, which not only gave a name to the Empire, but of which each Roman citizen considered himself as constituting a part. Nor were the fair sex divested of these ideas; nay, indeed, 'tis to their influence on public affairs, and on private conduct, that we must attribute much of that vigour of body, and elevation of mind, which not only stimulated to deeds of renown, but also gave strength and fortitude to accomplish their noble darings. In the elegant picture which Tacitus has drawn of Roman manners, we see the anxiety which filled the breast of the Roman matron to fulfil the important duties attached to her character; we see her placing her chief glory, and cultivating her most amiable passions, in a strict attention to the maternal and domestic virtues; we see her thus acquiring and preserving a dignity of manners, an elegant and feminine resolution which invariably produced an elevation of mind and sentiment, which rendered her often an object of the purest affection, and always held her up to public view as deserving of the highest respect, and warmest esteem. Yet, notwithstanding the influence which this respect and veneration for the fair sex had on the manners of the people, in which their love for their country, their universal mother, was mixed with all the tender feelings of the maternal home, it may be necessary to observe that many of the finer sentiments were not mingled with it, for it was alone the modesty and reserve so strongly united in the female breast, with the elevated sentiments of patriotism, which rendered the *matronly* character an object of such veneration and esteem. With respect to the younger part of the sex, it was quite different, for the unmarried ladies not yet having had an opportu-

pity of practising the matronly virtues, were not considered as possessed of any thing else which could interest the softer affections; of course all the softer sensations of virtuous and mutual love, if they were not unknown, were yet allowed to remain dormant in the youthful breast. The ceremony of marriage was merely considered as a political union, which was only to be formed on prudent or interested motives, and which might also be dissolved at the convenience of the parties; thus formed without love, it continued without affection, and the husband considered the *wife* only as the *mother* of his children. This *mental separation* of the sexes, tended much to form a code of domestic manners differing widely from ours, and to sketch which slightly shall be the object of our present essay. Springing from a savage banditti, the manners of the earliest Romans were warlike, which suited well with their rustic employments, for their magistrates and generals cultivated those fields which they had defended, or which their valour had won, and they gloried in holding the plough with those arms which had resisted the encroachments of the enemy, and given vigour to the infant state; indeed, even in the later ages of the Republic, we find the Roman Senate delegating the command of their armies to chiefs who were called from the plough to be entrusted with the preservation of their country. In their best times we find that the *city* was not always the residence of the Roman *citizen*, and such was their attachment to the country and to rural employments, that in times of peace the Senators only visited Rome, once every nine days, when they came to provide themselves at the public markets, to examine and confirm the regulations which the city magistrates had published in the Capitol, or at the Forum, and which required three days consideration before they had the effect of laws; from these political cares, they speedily returned to their cottages, to the cultivation of their vines, and to perform the most laborious duties with their own hands: indeed the practice of residing on their estates was so general, that a species of messengers, called *viatores*, were appointed in order to inform them of extraordinary convocations of the Senate, or of other important matters. Such were the simple manners which preserved their public virtues, and made them at length the lords of the world; then probity, industry and simplicity were their characteristics, and as Sallust elegantly observes, "In the Camp, and in the city, a decency of manners every where prevailed; "and the supreme controul which justice and "virtue had over the Romans, was less the "effect of the laws, than of their own natural "dispositions. They supported themselves "and the Republic by two means; by courage "in time of war, and by justice and moderation in peace." We will now proceed, however, to their more polished times, when the remains of their ancient virtue were united with the refinements of Greece and Persia. In the division of their time, they reckoned twelve hours in the day, and the same number in the night, beginning the day at sun-rise, so that the length of their hours depended on the length of the natural day; the first hour of every day was dedicated to religion, and the temples were always open for this purpose, and even lighted up for the convenience of those who chose to come early. Some of the antient writers observe that an hour was too little for some of the devotees, whose wants were so numerous and so various, that they were obliged to repeat them over frequently, lest their deities should not understand, or should forget them, particularly as they were often obliged to invoke a distinct deity for each separate want. Their devotions over, there was next an indispensable necessity of attending the levees of those on whom they depended, or from whom they expected favours; this soon became a general custom with all, and it was not unfrequent to see the magistrates and most opulent citizens running from palace to palace to pay their court to the great men of the day: this indeed was carried to such a length as to engage the attention of the Satyrists, and has been spiritedly noticed by Juvenal in his 5th Satire, where he paints the *early client* as not having had time to tie his shoe-strings. These visits were also considered as highly complimentary, and we find that Cicero's house was always well attended, and his doors were always opened to the citizens and strangers of any note, nay Pompey himself in the plenitude of his power did not disdain to mix among the crowd of citizens who crowded his hall, not only to see him at home, but also to attend him to the Forum and the Senate, where they stopped till the evening to accompany him to his house. On the entrance of the visitor he kissed his hand, and extended it to his patron, whose hand, if on intimate terms, he was allowed to kiss, but there are no traces in the different Roman authors, of bowing the head, or any part of the body in common salutations this mark of respect being reserved for the gods alone, at least during the times of republican virtue. These visits were always paid in a

ceremonial dress, and were received in the vestibule of the mansion, which was adorned with ancestorial busts and statues; here the visitors amused themselves with chatting on the news of the day, until the patron was visible, so that these visits answered the purpose of our modern coffee-houses. At nine in the morning, being generally their third hour, the business of the Forum began; which called all the citizens together, either as judges, or counsellors, as parties, solicitors, friends to the suitors, or as mere spectators, particularly where any question of political importance was to be agitated. Yet all did not employ their time in this way, for those who were engaged in the service of the state, or occupied in providing for their families, considered the first six hours, as necessary for business, the remainder they devoted to pleasure or to leisure; the evenings therefore of all were dedicated to the public walks and baths, to the pleasures of the table, and the entertainment of their friends, and to the manly exercises of the Gymnasium as well as to the theatres and *arena*. The sports of the Gymnasium resembled our Tennis, and their walks were in the public gardens, or in the gardens of their friends; some of the more luxurious were carried round the environs in a species of litter, or took exercise in the spacious colonnades of the temples, or in their own magnificent galleries; and all the ranks and ages crowded to the Amphitheatre to witness the feats of the Gladiators, or the performances of their *actors*, for *actresses* were then unknown. From these pleasures the ladies were not entirely excluded; but sometimes they met in the galleries and vestibules of the different mansions, where they formed separate parties, and *conversationes* amongst themselves, or joined in the amusements of the men, adapting their pleasures to their different tastes. In the early times of Roman simplicity, their supper formed their chief meal, this consisted of milk and vegetables, and they only eat meat upon particular occasions; in their most luxurious times, the supper still preserved its superiority and the breakfast and dinner were only considered as necessary for children and artisans, a mere refreshment of bread, milk, or cheese, with a little wine being all that was taken during the day by the rich, who reserved their luxury for the evening. The banquetting rooms were large and lofty, and generally placed at the top of the house; in some, pipes were contrived so as to shed perfumes on the guests, and in all it was customary to scatter flowers and perfumes over the apartment, and among the visitors, the tables were round and supported by one foot, of exquisite workmanship, inlaid with box and ivory, and ornamented with gold and silver, yet the luxury of a table cloth was unknown, and the only care they had for cleanliness, was to wipe them with a sponge on the removal of each course; in latter times indeed the *cloth* was introduced, but it was of purple embroidered with gold or silver. At first they sat on little benches or stools, but after their intercourse with the Asiatics, they adopted their custom of reclining on beds or couches during their meals; this however was at first confined to the men, as the ladies thought it inconsistent with modesty; they *sat* however upon the beds, and it appears from Valerius Maximus, that it was not until the time of the *first* Cæsars that the ladies began to recline upon the couches according to the male custom. In referring this passage of Valerius, to the painting which we have selected, it seems to establish its antiquity, as being *long antecedent* to the Era of Herculaneum's destruction, and is therefore the more interesting as being a representation of the most antient manners.

The young people of both sexes, were only permitted to *sit* at the table, and on the edge of the bed of the nearest relations, who lay along on the couch with the body supported by cushions; these beds and cushions were of leather stuffed with wool, but we are told that it was a source of pleasantry with Heliogabalus to seat his guests on couches filled with air, when at a signal given from the tyrant, the slaves by turning a cock suffered the air to escape, and thus threw the astonished visitor under the table. Each guest at supper had his appointed place, the couch in the middle was for the master of the house, below him was placed his wife, as the ladies at Rome were not excluded from joining the jovial parties, though among the *Greeks* it was a thing forbidden; the seat above the master was always left for the principal guest, and called the *consular bed*, as being resolved at first for the Consuls when they visited their particular friends. Notwithstanding all this luxury, napkins were unknown, except when visitors brought their own, and we are told by Martial of one *Hermogenis* who had a trick of pocketing these napkins, and when at a feast where he was known to be invited none of the guests brought napkins with them, this ingenious gentleman contrived *to steal the cloth!* The attendance at table, was entirely performed by slaves, who were slightly clothed, and placed at the beaufet, at the water fountains, or to

hand round the vases and cups; some were to remove the dishes, and others to sprinkle the perfumes, and brush away the flies; on most occasions too the floor was strewed with lilies, roses, and other flowers, the guests, and even the slaves were adorned with wreaths of ivy, and the entrance of the courses was accompanied by bands of music; the first course consisted of eggs, oysters, and vegetables, the second of fish, and flesh variously dressed, and the third consisted entirely of confectionary and fruit, similar to a modern desert.

The *Original Painting* which we have chosen for this month, is completely illustrative of many of these remarks, and is peculiarly interesting, as shewing to us the manners of the time more accurately than any description can possibly do; it represents a domestic repast in which the *toute ensemble* gives us a clear idea of the domestic manners of the ancients. A young man reclining on a couch before the table, and supporting himself on his left arm, drinks out of a horn from the small extremity, by holding it up to let the liquor run into his mouth. The figure is altogether very fine, and exhibits a species of luxury peculiar to the Romans, who are said in this manner to empty at one draught a large vessel of wine. The original is about two feet square, and was found in digging under the village of Resina; the colours are still in good preservation, the bed or couch has a white covering, and the lady's vest and the net which envelopes her hair are of a bright yellow, the other parts are a leaden coloured back-ground, whilst the floor and table are of a bright brown. The mode of sprinkling the tables and floors with aromatic flowers is here exemplified, and confirms the domestic descriptions given us by Athenæus and Aristophanes; whilst the attitudes of the two principal figures are completely illustrative of a passage in Valerius Maximus, where he says "*In ipsis lectis cum viris cubantibus, fœminæ sedentes cœnabant.*" In the back ground is a slave coming in and bearing a box, which *being shut* has caused much speculation amongst the Neapolitan connoisseurs, *to ascertain what the box contained*; one party asserting that it was the furniture of the toilet, a second that it was filled with sweet-meats and comfitures for the close of the repast, and a third, &c. &c. *Risum teneatis!*

POETRY.

LINES

Addressed to a Friend, on the Birth-day of Emeline, in October.

(WESTALL.)

AWAKE! arise! this natal day,
Demands a prompt and ardent lay;
Happiest lover, rise and twine
A garland for thy Emeline.
What though sedate October knows,
Nor musky pink, nor flaunting rose;
And though the jasamine doth not shed
Its gales of perfume round her head,
Yet bloom the myrtles, and appear
Unchang'd throughout the changing year;
Nor can the garden, or the grove,
A plant produce more like to love:
No careless hand its form can raise,
No thoughtless heart secure its days;
When summer pours refulgent heat,
It seeks the shelter'd cool retreat;
When icy winter wraps the streams,
Desires the warm refreshing beams;
In every season asks the bliss
Of still, unvary'd tenderness;
Possess'd of this, its leaves are seen,
For, ever fresh, with glossy green;
Possess'd of this, its blossoms glow,
All lovely, spite of winter's snow.
Happiest lover! seek no more,
Nor the garden flowers deplore;
Of myrtle be the garland made,
Design'd that beauteous brow to shade;
But here and there the wreath adorn
With ripen'd ears of fruitful corn.

REFLECTIONS BY A FATHER.

(MERCER.)

Though sweet the breath of vernal hours
When garlands hang on every thorn,
When every path is strew'd with flow'rs,
And opening rose-buds greet the Morn;
Who knows what blasts may yet arise?—
However sweet, however gay,
The blossom may our hopes betray:
It is th' autumnal fruit we prize!

Alas! the same precarious fate
Attends on Childhood's pleasing show:
The parent views, with hopes elate,
His favorites round the table grow;
Who, lost to worth in riper years,
To duty lost, may yet conspire
To wring thy heart, unhappy Sire!
And drench thy furrow'd cheek in tears.

While the poor child, of homelier mien,
Who in the corner sits forlorn,
Sobs hourly at parental spleen,
And eats the bitter bread of scorn;—
Untainted by the pamper'd crew,
And faithful to Affection's call,
Perhaps, in his paternal hall,
Shall trim the lamp of joy anew!

But, youth and manhood fairly past,
There still awaits a trying stage;
The latent vice may spring at last,
Baleful and rank, in frozen Age!—
When he, who honor's semblance wore,
Forgetful of his better days,
Stoops from his pride as life decays,
And pants for virtuous fame no more!

Perhaps the sordid love of gold
Contaminates the Dotard's mind:
Perhaps, to friends and kindred cold,
Unjust, suspicious and unkind,
He feeds a viper near his heart,
And sneaks, unpitied, to the grave;
The dupe of some obsequious knave,
Or wheedled by a Strumpet's art!

O! may the star beneath whose power
I rose, and ripen'd into man;
Escap'd, in Life's unguarded hour,
When on the verge of guilt I ran;
Kind and propitious as before,
Prolong its Heaven-illumin'd ray
To guide me through the close of day,
And land me on a safer shore!

WRITTEN ON A WINDOW AT AN INN.

(ANON.)

HERE, too, thy *name*, sweet maid, shall stand,
And fairest in the list be found.
Where many an artless traveller's hand
His fair one's praises scrawls around!

Afresh, at ev'ry stage, he grieves
Which bears him further from her arms;
And, fondly, still behind him leaves
Some frail memorial of her charms:
So pines and moans the stricken hart;
And, as he flies, betrays his wound—
Drags to the shades a rankling dart,
And stains with crimson drops the ground.

Stranger, to this dear name be kind,
While far her lover roves forlorn;
Pity the anguish of *his* mind,
From the soft smile of beauty torn.

So, to thy destin'd journey's end,
Be Hope companion of thy way;
And there thy mistress or thy friend,
With truth unchang'd, thy cares repay.

LINES

SUGGESTED BY THE SIGHT OF A RUINED CASTLE.

HIGH on the mountains steepest side
Frowns a dark wreck of Norman pride!
Its time-struck halls of old were hung
With bloody spoils; and there was sung
The victor's praise, while yet he stood
O'erspread with dust, and stain'd with blood:
Around him all his barons bold
Stretch'd their large limbs, herculean mould,
Recumbent, while the runic rhymes
Up-called the chiefs of other times,
To hear of battles lately won,
And glory in their mighty son.
There oft imperial rulers sate,
And, awful, judg'd a nation's fate:
There oft the titled dames were wont
To give the dance a sparkling front;
And, as the blushing beauties mov'd,
The conquering warriors saw and lov'd.

No joys, no glad triumphant sounds,
The wasting ruin now rebounds;
But from its towers the owlet's scream
Oft breaks the neighb'ring rustic's dream;
And deep its mould'ring vaults among
The wily fox conceals her young.

Where are the sons of valour gone?
Where are the dames who lovely shone?
They, too, were subject to decay,
And the proud line is swept away!

The storied marble rais'd on high,
And deck'd with pageant heraldry,
The storied marble scarce supplies
A veil, to hide from vulgar eyes
Their mingled dust; the sole remains
Of Beauty's and of Valour's trains!

PUBLIC PLEASURES.

Talk what you will of taste, my friend, you'll find
Two of a face, as soon as of a mind.——*Pope's Imitations of Horace.*

THE THEATRES.

DRURY-LANE.

THE Dramatic Intelligence of this month is of no small importance. Both houses have produced pieces which have agreeably disappointed the expectations of a public, accustomed for months, nay years, to nonsensical escapes, ludicrous attempts at interest or wit, and all the comic terrors of melo-dramas. But not satisfied with bringing forward an excellent Farce, written by the late Mr. Tobin, the Managers of the Haymarket, have introduced a *Prodigy!* on their stage. Drury-Lane has presented a phenomenon of a different nature, a solitary but striking instance of candour, in the Author of *Venoni*, who, not deaf to the voice of criticism; but open to conviction, when the defects of his work were pointed out, honourably withdrew his piece till he had made it more worthy of public applause.

From general, we must now proceed to particular remarks. We will begin with *Venoni, or the Novice of St. Mark*, a drama in three acts, from the pen of the Author of the *Castle Spectre*.

The French Stage continually abused by our writers, still remains the source from which most of our modern plays are taken. Indeed were it not for the justice of the abuse lavished upon it, one would be tempted to think that the wish of concealing the thefts which they have committed, is the only reason that prompts our Authors, or rather translators, to be so liberal in their animadversions on the French drama, as it is natural to expect that we should refrain from perusing what is represented to us as unworthy our attention. The truth or falsehood of this opinion, cannot pass *our* judgment, who not only have read, but have seen most of the old, and the greatest part of the new French pieces performed on the Parisian Theatres. A few years ago we had the pleasure of seeing *Les Victimes Cloitrées* acted in the metropolis of France, and little did we suspect, that it would so soon assume a different name, and make its appearance at Drury-Lane. Since it has made its appearance however, we will not delay giving a faithful portrait of its chief features.

Celestino, the Prior of the Convent of St. Mark, at Messina, having conceived an improper passion for *Josepha, Marchioness Caprana's* daughter, and the affianced bride of *Venoni*, a young Sicilian nobleman, has persuaded the Marchioness to send her child to the Ursuline Convent, in the hope that she may be tempted to take the vows of a nun instead of those of a wife. This Convent is only separated by a party-wall from his own; and the Abbess being entirely devoted to his will, he attempts *Josepha's* virtue, but in vain. Terrified lest she should make his conduct publicly known, he orders her to be confined in a vault, and not only spreads a report of her death, but has an empty coffin buried in her stead. *Venoni*, on hearing of her fate resolves to become a Monk, and begins his noviciate at the Convent of St. Mark, on account of its vicinity to *Josepha's* tomb. The Viceroy of Sicily, *Count Benvoglio*, undertakes fruitlessly to alter his resolution, for at the moment when he has almost overthrown all his objections, the Prior, secretly desirous to possess the wealth of the youth, points to his mistress's grave, names her, and thus reconquers his victim. *Father Michael*, however, a young and benevolent Monk, who during a conflagration that had destroyed a wing of the Convent, some time before, has discovered proofs of the Prior's guilt, finds means to lay them before *Venoni*, and presses him to fly. Vengeance alone engrosses the mind of the youth, his loud exclamations put *Father Michael* to flight and bring the Prior, whom *Venoni* reproaches with his crimes, and in whose hands he imprudently places the letter which *Michael* had left. His death or at least his captivity becomes necessary for the security of his foes, and he is forced down some secret steps into a vault, contiguous to which, *Lodovico*, an aged Monk, and a victim to the Prior's vengeance, has already spent twenty

years in confinement. A dagger is laid by the side of *Venoni*, in order that he may at once rid himself of existence, and his foes of their fears, and he is left, as they think quite alone. But *Lodovico* has penetrated into this dungeon, whilst seeking to escape, and when the youth seizes the dagger with the grasp of despair, to put an end to his sorrows, he snatches it from him, and points to a secret passage which communicates with the Ursuline Convent, and which he had lately discovered, but of which his weakness prevents him to avail himself to regain his liberty. *Venoni*, not being able to persuade him to follow him, promises to come to his assistance as soon as he has reached the *Viceroy*, and penetrating into the Ursuline Convent, arrives in the parlour, at the moment when the *Abbess*, after having vainly attempted a second time to force *Josepha* to become the Prior's mistress, commands her to be led back to her dungeon. Hearing his mistress's voice, *Venoni* rushes into her presence; she knows him, and they are about to fly, when the Prior and his confident, who have been secretly sent for by the *Abbess*, enter, and tear the lovers asunder. At this moment the good *Father Michael*, who has informed the *Viceroy* of *Venoni's* danger, and led him through the dungeons in search of his friend, bursts into the convent attended by him, the Marchioness *Caprana* and guards. The Prior is led away to punishment, and *Venoni* and *Josepha* rewarded for their past sufferings with freedom and felicity.

We have described the last act as it *now* is. It formerly consisted in exposing the lovers in their two cells, like two beasts of prey in their dens in masquerades, in knocking down walls, finding parchments written with blood, and other horrific circumstances. The alterations so judiciously made by the author have greatly improved his piece. Though rather too romantic, it teems with interest; its style is chaste and elegant, rather too languid in the few scenes intended to be comic, but highly animated in all the rest. The sentiments are all good, and well expressed. The characters are varied and well contrasted, especially the weak despondency of *Venoni* with the manly firmness of the *Viceroy*, and the revengeful spirit and cunning hypocrisy of the Prior, with the frank openness and philanthropic generosity of *Father Michael*. Far superior to any thing that has been produced this year, *Venoni, or, the Novice of St. Mark*, is not unworthy to rank after the *Curfew* and the *World*, the best dramatic compositions that have of late years graced the stage.

No play was ever more powerfully supported by the abilities of performers than *Venoni*. Elliston, in the novice, depicted melancholy despair with the most masterly correctness. Brooding incessantly over the loss of his bride, his mental faculties are obscured, but not extinguished. Frequent gleams of thought and memory flash across his gloomy sorrow, and to catch the fleeting expression of the soul in its momentary emersion from despair, is perhaps one of the most difficult imitations of nature, which the mimic art can give. Elliston, whose genius always rises with difficulties, displayed so deep a knowledge of the human heart, so exact a portraiture of the play of human passions, that we can scarcely recollect a single character in which he betrayed more real excellence. Wroughton in *Celestino*, was a faithful representative of meek-tongued hypocrisy, and Mr. H. Siddons in the *Viceroy*, was uniformly great; he surpassed our warmest hopes, and in his interview with *Venoni* in the convent, burst in all the splendour of truly Siddonian genius. Mr. De Camp in *Father Michael* displayed real excellence, as well as Mrs. H. Siddons, in *Josepha*.

HAYMARKET THEATRE.

"*The School for Authors*," an Afterpiece in Three Acts, by the late Mr. Tobin, is the next dramatic production which has been brought forward during the course of this month, but on a different soil. Blind to their own interests, the managers of Covent Garden kept this piece in obscurity for several years, till the grave had closed over its author. They have at last ventured to represent it, and it has been justly crowned with the most complete success. Like *Venoni*, originality is not its source; its plot is partly taken from a French play, and from the patron of Foote, but the excellence of the dialogue makes up for its deficiency in novelty.

A rich citizen has forsaken his counter to turn poet. A tragedy, the fruit of his nightly inspirations has been accepted, and the evening of its performance is arrived. Doubtful as to its fate, he engages a young man *Cleveland*, his protegé, to pass for the author of it, and promises to further his suit with his niece, provided he can give some proof of genius. Mr. *Wormwood*, a professed critic, and one of the young lady's admirers, being informed that his

rival is the author of the tragedy, forms a party with a *reviewing* footman, and some livery servants to damn it. The awful hour approaches, the citizen remains at home in trembling expectation, when his foreman suddenly bursts into his presence, and informs him that all is lost, that his uninsured warehouse, in the Minories, is on fire, and that the engines cannot play upon it.—"How the rascal frightened me!" exclaimed the rejoicing author, "what do I care for such trifles now!"—In a a few moments *Cleveland* brings him the melancholy intelligence that the tragedy is completely damned. *Wormwood* then rushes triumphant, whilst *Cleveland* retires, and reveals the share which he had in hurrying the doom of a piece, which, without his exertions, and those of his friends, would undoubtedly have continued to disgrace the stage for a month or two. *Cleveland* re-appears, and astonishes his rival by replying to his taunting condolance, that his piece is not yet condemned. The citizen's niece then enters, and informs her uncle and *Wormwood*, that *Cleveland's* comedy, that was acted at the other house, has been completely successful. She is united with her lover, *Mr. Wormwood* is turned out of the house, and a severe lesson given to malevolent critics, rather than to authors.

The plot of this piece is simple, and calculated to excite a highly comic interest. It is written in an easy and spirited style. The wit which flashes throughout the dialogue, is chaste and natural, the situations well imagined, and we only regret that through the neglect of managers, the author should have been deprived of the pleasure of witnessing the highly flattering and justly deserved reception with which his afterpiece met from a judicious public.

The duty of a dramatic critic does not consist merely in pointing out faults, and incessantly lashing both authors and performers. Many have, it is true, fancied that it was their duty; and, by frequency of their example, have impressed the same belief on the public mind.—But its repetition does not change the nature of error. Convinced that the real end of criticism is to assist and improve talents, in whatever class they appear, by unfolding the mirror of truth to their eyes, and enabling them to see a fair and impartial display of their defects and excellencies, we shall dare to rise above the level of prejudices, and sacrifice the hope of pleasing by witty severity, to the necessity of yielding praise, where praise is justly due.

A performer, who for two or three years has trod the stage unnoticed, and till then deservedly so, has, during this last fortnight, suddenly started to a degree of eminence in her profession, and consequently of favour with the public, which is the more honourable to her, as it springs from the exertion of real talents. In the part of the *Spoiled Child*, in the farce that bears that name, Miss Kelly first revealed her powers. With a playfulness worthy of Mrs. Jordan, and manners far more refined than Storace's, she one day promises to succeed them both in the public estimation. In *Lilla*, in the *Siege of Belgrade*, she displayed not only a fine voice and much science, but a considerable share of comic abilities. The manner in which she delivered her dancing song, her artful coolness, arch simplicity, and winning grace, revealed so much unexpected excellence as to create admiration and surprise. In *Floretta*, in the *Cabinet*, a part which, through Mrs. Mountain's indisposition, was entrusted to Miss Kelly, she acquitted herself with as much success. As *Caroline*, in the farce of the *Prize*, she, last Wednesday night, laid still stronger claims to applause; especially in her imitation of a spirited fashionable lady just returned from the Continent. Her French song, or burlesque on the French opera, was delivered in the true Parisian style. In a word, we congratulate the managers on the system which they have lately adopted, of bringing forward many performers, who, till then, had been totally useless; as, in the present case, it has led to the discovery of talents, which, for want of encouragement, might have remained unknown even to their possessors.

RETROSPECT.

(DECEMBER 1808,)

Neptune, besides the sway
Of every salt flood, and each ebbing stream,
Took in by lot 'twixt high and nether Jove,
IMPERIAL RULE OF ALL THE SEA-GIRT ISLES,
That, like to rich and various gems, inlay
The unadorned bosom of the Deep;
While he, to grace his tributary gods,
By course commits to several governments,
And gives them leave to wear their sapphire crowns
And wield their little tridents: but THIS ISLE,
The greatest and the best of all the Main,
He quarters to his blue-hair'd deities.—*MILTON.*

"Gentlemen," said the celebrated Mr. Curran, addressing himself to an Irish Jury, during the State Trials, "there are two sorts of *prophets*: one, deriving their knowledge from real or fancied inspiration, and who are sometimes mistaken; but there is the other class—*who prophecy what they are determined to bring about* themselves." Now "of this second and," continuing the language of the barrister, "by far most authentic class" of prophets is *Napoleon Bonaparte*; who when he lately predicted that he would obtain possession of Madrid, and crown his brother there, had determined to fulfil the prediction himself! The prophecy was notorious; and its accomplishment seems at hand! Something may, however, be done towards arresting the successful career of the conqueror. With the forces already gone from this country to the scene of conflict, and the aids which have recently been sent to the same destination, something beneficial, let us still hope, may arise from the cordial co-operation of British valour with Spanish patriotism—*if* Spain is but true to herself, and *if* her sons indeed cultivate friendship with the troops of Great Britain. The contest will probably be protracted; and the issue, after all, seems extremely problematical.

As this is an age of revolutions, we are not to be surprised that Turkey, so famous for its political mutations, now assumes the attitude of revolutionary defiance. Its recent changes, nevertheless, indicate extraordinary things; and we cannot too much applaud the wisdom that directed the present administration to elect Mr. Adair, at this crisis, for their representative at Constantinople. His manners are admirably adapted for the dignified and important mission in which he is engaged; his acquaintance with foreign affairs is considerable; and his integrity and ability are unquestionable.—Ministers have also nobly shewn themselves, in the appointment of this diplomatist, above the pettyness of party-recollections. Mr. Adair was the habitual, and inseparable, friend of the late Mr. Fox.

America, it should seem, although distracted by internal divisions, still adheres to the policy by which discord has been chiefly engendered among her states. French influence still maintains its accustomed ascendancy in the councils of her cabinet! I shall, on some future occasion, endeavour to place this matter in the light in which it ought to be considered.

Removed from the shaking of the surrounding nations, and though she enjoys comparative felicity, yet, sensibly affected by the calamities of other countries and deeply solicitous for the prolongation of her own blessings, Britain, under these complicated circumstances, is again legally called upon to humble herself before the Divine Power, and implore the Divine protection! Another religious Fast-Day (February 8, 1809) is by Authority appointed. So far from objecting to this measure as one likely to "kill more fish than Frenchmen," I do devoutly hope, contrary to this pretty witticism of one of my contemporaries in literature, that we shall be enabled to kill more Frenchmen than fish!

Our long-sitting Court of Inquiry has terminated its sitting—if not its inquiries; and our generals—such of them only, I *now* trust! as are known fit to command—are at liberty to decamp on actual service. Sir Harry Burrard, according to the newspapers, shed tears,

in the court, on hearing the testimony borne to his integrity by Sir Arthur Wellesley; and this "weeping scene," as some diurnal writers described it, seems, however serious to the parties really concerned in it, to have been the occasion of much mirth to others! I confess there appears to me nothing laughable in the circumstance. Situated as he then was, it was natural for Sir Harry Burrard to be affected at the gentlemanly and liberal declaration made in his favour by Sir Arthur Wellesley. His emotion was natural, though it might not be quite manly.

While we are on subjects connected with the profession of arms, I cannot refrain from adverting to the miserable catastrophe of Captain Balderston, of the Parthian sloop of war, who was lately shot, on board his own ship, by one James Smith, master's-mate of the ship. Revenge, deliberate revenge, confessedly nerved the arm of this malicious murderer; who, instead of deploring the vindictiveness by which he had been instigated to the dreadful crime, actually expressed regret that he had not dispatched Lieutenant Stevenson, as well as his Captain, since, conceiving both his officers to be his enemies, he had accomplished only half of his meditated retaliation!! It is revolting enough, indeed, to contemplate such rooted depravity of disposition; but, sincerely as we must deprecate the fate of Captain Balderston, and decidedly as we must detest the conduct of James Smith, I ardently hope that this shocking transaction may not be wholly unproductive of salutary consequences. Let it operate as a warning against rashness or caprice in officers, while it acts as a check upon the mutinous spirits of some of their men! Passion, either in the commander or the crew, is uniformly destructive of all genuine discipline.

Considered with reference to Domestic Politics, and perhaps as eventually affecting the external relations of our Government, one of the most important recent occurrences is—the Death of the Great Earl of Liverpool. Long in the *confidence of the crown*, and systematically conversant with the *machine of the constitution*, this nobleman is understood to have constantly possessed an *unseen* but *not unexisting* influence over the *interior* decisions of the *cabinet* of his country! Of this species of influence the celebrated Edmund Burke complained, in his better days, with patriotic consistency; but to this identical influence he notwithstanding submitted, in his declining years, with courtly obsequiousness. This influence, however, has decreased, is decreasing; and will, very shortly, entirely hide its diminished head!

December 27, 1808. *Nemo.*

BIRTHS.

On the 7th ult. at his house in Hertford-street, the Lady of Mr. Dent, M. P. of a daughter.

On the 12th ult. at Conan House, the Lady of Sir Hector Mackenzie, of Gairlock, Bart. of a son.

MARRIAGES.

On the 8th ult. Mr. Eyton, son of General Eyton, to Miss Campbell, daughter of Lady Campbell.

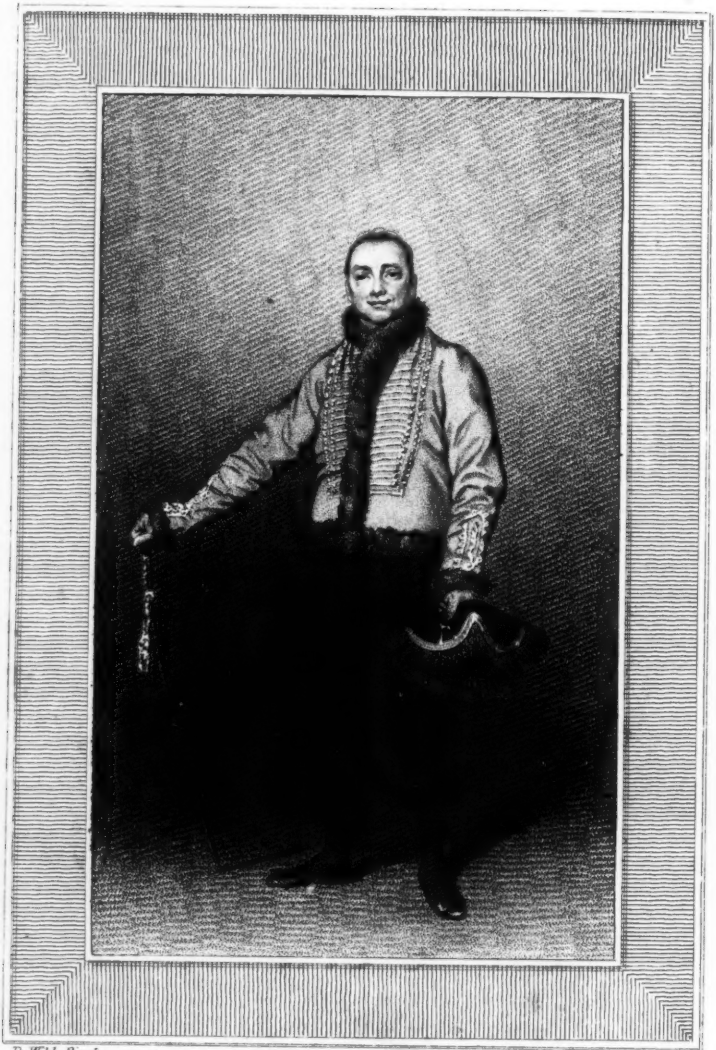
On Sunday, the 16th ult. at Christ Church, Liverpool, Mr. Saxoni, the celebrated rope-dancer, to Miss Cabanel.

DIED.

THE EARL OF LIVERPOOL.

This venerable and respected Nobleman died on the 17th ult. in the 80th year of his age, at his house in Hertford-street, of a disorder in the bowels, which in a few days completely exhausted him. His Lordship is succeeded in his title by his eldest son, Lord Hawkesbury. By his death, the offices of Clerk of the Pells in Ireland, and Collector of the Customs Inward of the Port of London, become vacant.—The former, we believe, was given in reversion by Lord Sidmouth, to his son, the Hon. Mr. Addington. His Lordship was for many years President of the Board of Trade. In the year 1782 he succeeded to the family title of a Baronet; in 1786 he was created Lord Hawkesbury; and in 1796 Earl of Liverpool. He was twice married, and has left issue, beside the present Lord Liverpool, the Hon. Charles Jenkinson. The noble Earl never recovered the shock he received on the accident which happened to the Countess. When her head-dress caught fire, recollecting that there were always two servants in the apartment of the Noble Lord, she burst into the room, and by the timely assistance she received from them, the flames were extinguished, but the Noble Earl survived the alarm but a few days.

On the 30th ult. at Newmarket, T. Panton, Esq. a gentleman well known on the turf.



De Wilde Pinxt. E. Scriven sc.

Mr. FAWCETT as SERVITZ,

in the Exile.

London, Published by & for Bell & De Camp, 11, Catherine Street, Strand, Jan. 2. 1799.

DRAMATIC MEMOIRS AND CRITICISMS

OF EMINENT PERFORMERS.

LIFE OF MR. JOHN FAWCETT, OF COVENT GARDEN THEATRE.

IT is not unworthy the dignity of philosophical observation, to remark how little the human mind follows the bent of circumstances The age in which we live, is an age of political wonders. It has been crowded with events which even imagination could not have conceived, and the nature of which so tragically awful, ought, it might have been expected, to have produced as deep an impression on the moral faculties of men, as it has on their social relations and situation. The murder of kings and emperors, the annihilation of monarchies, the degradation of nations, and the subjugation of the continent, are occurrences too unusual and too important not to have awakened curiosity in the breasts of the few who securely witness the scene of ruin and desolation, but they have failed in what was most likely to be their consequence: they have not tinged the national character with gloom. The contrary seems to have happened; the seriousness of the English people had been reprobated by all Europe, as tending to weaken the charms of society, and foster a ferocious spirit of independence (for such were the epithets which those whose villainy and ferocity baffles the strength of expression of our language, were wont to bestow on our dignified and manly love for freedom)—that seriousness is now, strange to tell, greatly diminished. Proofs will be required to invigorate our assertion; and, as the Stage may be called the pulse of a nation's taste and disposition, we will only refer our inquisitive readers to an examination of its present state. There, during the last century, tragedy flourished in proud and just pre-eminence, but it is no longer the idol of the passing hour. It still sometimes make its appearance, when supported by the name of one of our celebrated ancient writers, but even then cannot escape the abuse of box-critics, who continually exclaim—"there's no wit in this!—how serious—I wonder how people can bear such stupid, dull stuff!"—Such were the *judicious* and pointed remarks which I have heard all sexes and all ages make around me, even whilst Belvidera's sorrows filled the stage. Is it not clear, then, that the taste of the nation is changed? Comedy, or at least something that boasts that name, melo-dramas, and farces, are now almost the only theatrical representations that can please our modern public. Thus, whilst the whole universe is shaken with revolutions, and deeds are perpetrated which bring dishonour upon the human race—whilst the stream of events flows dark with crimes and destruction, we renounce the former gravity of our character, and, thoughtlessly lively, waste the greater part of our evenings in laughing at dramatic trifles, which betray but little genius and a great affectation of wit. Mr. Fawcett has dedicated his talents to comedy, and but too often to farce, under the name of comedy. After having so often entertained his audience on the scenic boards, and excited our admiration by the variety of his powers, we will now unfold the part which he has acted on the wide stage of the world, in the complicated drama of social life.

It has often been observed, that no parent checked more severely the inclinations of his children, than he who in his youth had, in defiance to paternal authority, formed a matrimonial connexion. This observation will not prove less true, although its application be different. Mr. Fawcett, who distinguished himself as a performer in the days of Garrick, resolved to prevent his son, the present celebrated comic actor, from following the same profession. The natural genius of the youth was probably strengthened by its early contention with difficulties. Born in London in 1769, he received his education at St. Paul's school; after which he was bound apprentice to Mr. Warren, a respectable linen-draper in the Minories. The distance of his abode from the Theatres, could not prevent him from dedicating every evening hour which he could steal from business to his favourite amusement. He was not satisfied with witnessing dramatic representations, but copied the parts with which he was best pleased, and frequently rehearsed them. Unable at last to bear the constraint which his situation imposed upon him, he silently bade adieu to his master, and joined a company of strollers, under the assumed name

of Foote. The abruptness of his departure prevented him from securing his papers; and he thus left Mr. Warren in possession of a number of comic parts in his own hand-writing.

The company of which he had become a member, shaped its course for Margate, where he made his first appearance in the character of *Courtall*, in the *Belle's Stratagem*. His exertions were crowned with success; and he next repaired to Tunbridge, where Mr. Cumberland noticed his rising abilities, and introduced him into society. Here, it is reported, that Lord Abingdon not only favoured him with his own patronage and that of his friends, but instructed him in music. He afterwards visited York, where he obtained an engagement, and was obliged to perform the parts of *Romeo*, *Douglas*, and *Oronoko*; but, fancying himself unable to excel in tragedy, he stipulated, as soon as Mr. Knight left the company, that he should never be forced again to assume a tragic character. In this town he formed the acquaintance with a widow lady of the name of Mills, whom he shortly after married.

The fame of John Fawcett's comic talents at length reached the metropolis; and Mr. Harris sent him and his wife a liberal offer for an engagement at Covent Garden Theatre. His pride and ambition were too highly gratified by the prospect which such an engagement opened to his view, not to lead him to snatch this opportunity of courting the favour of a London audience. At the beginning of the season of 1791, he, therefore, appeared at Covent Garden, as *Caleb*, in "*He would be a Soldier.*" But he did not rise very high in the public estimation till the opera of "*The Travellers in Switzerland*" was acted, in which he filled the part of *Count Friponi*. Ever since this performance, his reputation was established, and its increase kept pace with the rapid improvement of his abilities. He declares that he never saw the celebrated Edwin perform, and, though equal in excellence to this comedian in all his most difficult characters, has proved, by his originality, the truth of his assertion.

The summer of the year 1795 opened a new career to Mr. Fawcett's abilities; Mr. Bannister, on leaving the Haymarket Theatre, recommended him as his successor to Mr. Coleman, who engaged him instantly; and, as his hopes were rather surpassed than disappointed, entrusted him soon with the stage management of the house. Here he continued, for a long series of years, the chief supporter of the summer performances; but, whilst Fortune publicly smiled upon his exertions, a private calamity embittered his life; for, about the year 1797, he lost his wife, who left him a daughter, the only pledge of their affection.

Not satisfied with the fame which he obtained as an actor, Mr. Fawcett resolved to claim the bays of authorship, if the merely composing pantomimes, entitle a writer to the appellation of an author. In 1800, he brought out *Obi, or Three Fingered Jack*, at the Haymarket; in 1801, *Perouse, or the Desolate Island*, at Covent Garden; in 1802, *The Brazen Mask, or Alberto and Rosalie*, at the same theatre; and *Fairies Revels, or Love in the Islands*, at the Haymarket; where, in 1804, he produced *The Enchanted Island*, taken from Shakespear's *Tempest*: these pantomimes prove that he possesses a large share of ingenuity, skill, and imagination.

In the year 1803, Mr. Fawcett gave up his engagement at the Haymarket, and performed, during several summers, at the most respectable country theatres. About this time, we believe, he formed a second matrimonial connexion with Miss Gawdry, a young lady who has placed him at the head of a rising family. Notwithstanding the number of comic performers who have risen to eminence on our stages since his first appearance, Mr. Fawcett still continues to form one of the brightest ornaments and powerful supporters of the Covent Garden Company. In private life, his manners are those of a gentleman; he is fond of agricultural pursuits, in which he frequently indulges himself at his farm in the vicinity of Hendon.

Mr. Fawcett's powers, although mostly dedicated to comedy and farce, can sometimes rise above their usual sphere, and assail the heart with the pathos of sensibility itself. His countenance is not calculated to display the vehemence of raging passions in elevated characters, but the gentler emotions of nature in humbler and more artless minds. In farcical parts, it assumes a ludicrous expression, which is not a little assisted by the inharmonious harshness of his voice.

The portrait accompanying these memoirs, represents Mr. Fawcett in the character of *Servitz*, in Mr. Reynolds's new drama of *The Exile*. Before we proceed to our strictures on his performance, a short account of the plot of this piece may not prove unexceptionable to our readers.

Like most of our modern plays, it boasts a French origin; for it is taken from a novel entitled Elizabeth, and written by Madame Cottin, in which filial affection is depicted in the most natural colours, and with a simplicity truly enchanting. The drama is not equal to

the novel, although it far surpasses in interest and elegance of style many of the three act pieces which crowd the stage. It consists of two plots, the one serious and the other comic, and which have so little connection together, that they might easily be divided into two separate plays. To the French novel, Mr. Reynolds is indebted for the serious part, and to his own genius, for the comic or rather farcical trash with which he has incumbered his drama.—The following are the chief features of the former.

Unjustly pursued by the jealous ambition of a Russian nobleman, *Count Ulric* has pined many years an exile in Siberia. His wife, *Sidona*, and his daughter, *Alexina*, shared his fate. The latter being informed, that if the *Empress* could be made acquainted with his sufferings, she would undoubtedly restore him to fortune and liberty, sets off on foot with an old servant, and without her father's knowledge, to supplicate the mercy of her sovereign at Petersburgh. Her lover, *Romanoff*, new to the *Governor of Tobolski*, secretly assumes the name and disguise of an Indian, protects her on her way, without making himself known, against the snares of his rival *Welzien*. After a series of dangers and escapes, she reaches Moscow on the eve of the *Empress's* coronation. Early the next morning a procession of the nobles, the *Patriarch*, the *Czarowitz*, the *Empress*, and natives of the different provinces composing the Russian empire, amongst which a band of Poles are seen long before the conquest and partition of Poland, march towards the palace, and the *Empress* is no sooner crowned than *Alexina's* voice is heard imploring her father's pardon. The *Patriarch*, brother to *Ulric's* foe, advises his sovereign to reject her suit, when the supposed Indian, *Daran*, who had saved the *Czarowitz's* life the day before, now claims her father's liberty as his reward, and, at last obtains it. Wild with joy, she returns to Siberia, without waiting for the written deed of pardon, and falls once more into the hands of *Welzien*, who conducts her to Tobolski. The *Governor* of this city not crediting her story, as she can adduce no written proofs of its truth, and willing to crush his nephew's hopes, promises her freedom if she will marry *Welzien*. *Daran* makes his appearance again; and, as he engages to himself to depart from her as soon as they are united, if she will consent to wed him, they are joined together. She then seeks her father, and when her filial affection almost gives way to despair at the thought of being separated for ever from *Romanoff*, the *Governor* enters with the royal pardon; and attended by her lover, who has now resumed his real character, and claims his bride. *Count Ulric* is restored to his former rank, and his enemy, *Prince Lowenstern* disgraced.

The comic plot, which unnecessarily and rather unpleasantly checks the course of the action, consists of the love of *Count Calmar* with the *Governor of Tobolski's* niece *Catherine*. This nobleman has left Petersburgh in search of her, and on his arrival in the above-mentioned city, meets with *Servitz*, formerly one of his servants, but now a gentleman at large, and a candidate for the post of town apothecary.—Hearing his old master's story, he promises to further his suit, boasting aloud of his influence in the *Governor's* family, from whose house, however, he is, a few minutes afterwards, politely turned out. He then bids the *Count* not to be disheartened, and informs him that he has heard that *Catherine's* aunt has let her a cabinet, which is not to be opened until her wedding day, and that it is now on its way to Tobolski. He proposes to have another cabinet constructed, in which he may conceal himself, and that it should be brought to the *Governor's* before the other has had time to arrive.—Through this means, he will see the young lady, and form a plan for her elopement. His design is put into execution, but the early arrival of the mysterious cabinet excites the *Governor's* suspicions; and hearing somebody breathe in it, imitates his niece's voice, and thus deceives the cunning *Servitz* whom he locks up in his hiding place. *Count Calmar's* rival, a Baron, and a great traveller, who writes his tour, then enters, and curious to see what the cabinet contains, unfastens the padlock, and turning round before he opens it, *Servitz* steals out. The "peeping traveller" gets into the machine, and is in his turn locked in by *Servitz*. A masquerade ensues, in which *Servitz* passes for the *Baron*, and runs away with the young lady who marries her lover. The *Baron* is found in the cabinet, and the *Governor* is obliged to approve of a match, which it is no longer in his power to prevent.

To enter into a minute examination of Fawcett's acting in *Servitz*, would not lead to any satisfactory account of his abilities. It is said that no actor can make as much of a bad part as he, and certainly his performance in *The Exile* is an instance of this. The character possesses neither novelty or wit, it lays no claims to nature, and is little indebted to art, and it contains two songs not only foolish, but

indecent; yet the bustling activity of its representative, the cunning wittiness expressed by his looks, and, above all, the predisposition of the audience to admire whatever flows from his lips supply most of the defects of the part, and have seemingly raised it to an undeserved height in the public estimation.

In no characters does Fawcett display greater abilities, than in those which abound with occasional bursts of natural feelings. His *Job Thornberry*, in the excellent comedy of *John Bull*, is a most affecting and masterly performance. His rustic simplicity, which (unlike the hypocrisy of more polished life, that compels us to hide all the emotions that start in our breasts) allows the least change of passions to be seen or felt in his countenance, or the modulation of his voice; the overflowing warmth of his heart, not checked by the ingratitude of friends and of an only daughter, but displaying itself at the call of nature; the rapidity with which his anger melts into tenderness and love, when he finds his daughter; and his nobly independent spirit afterwards in the scene with *Sir Simon Rochdale*, have never been equalled by any other performer. Bannister has frequently distinguished himself in the same part, but notwithstanding his great powers and the superiority of his voice, he has not been able to make us forget the original *Job Thornberry*.

In the drama of the *Africans*, acted last summer at the Haymarket, he displayed equal excellence in the character of *Madiboo*, which, though more highly comic than the preceding, also contains many pathetic passages. His *Lingo*, in *The Agreeable Surprise*, his *Caleb Quotem*, in *The Wags of Windsor*, and *Dr. Pangloss*, in *The Heir at Law*, are parts which require widely different abilities to do them justice. But his genius, which can so justly pourtray the finer feelings of the heart, can also burst forth in all the wild luxuriance of caricature, without quite overstepping the probability of nature. In characters like the above, therefore, he is eminently successful.

Mr. Fawcett has acquired the high fame which he enjoys, not only by the extent, but the variety of his powers. Monotony is the bane of theatrical excellence, for we should grow tired of perfection itself, if it could exist without variety; yet we fear less the innovation which he has of late introduced into his system of acting, may not lead him into defects equally dangerous. Instead of being satisfied with the applause of the most judicious part of the audience, he frequently plays in order to obtain the thundering approbation of the gods. Let not the popular favour which Munden's grimaces have purchased at the expense of truth and judgment tempt his ambition. For who, when he can please the wise, ought to care about the senseless opinion of the vulgar?